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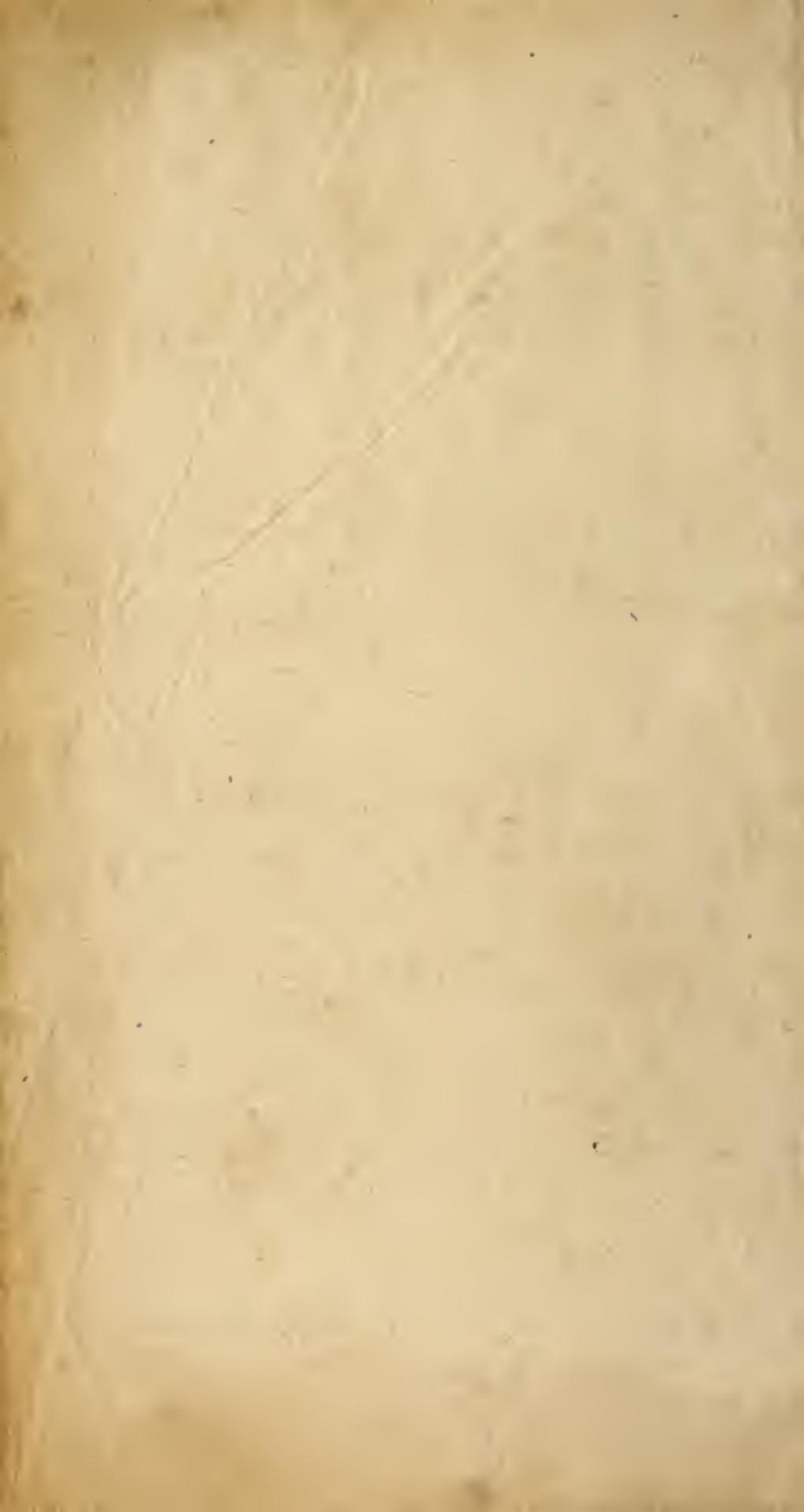
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*LIBRARY OF PRINCETON*  
MAY 19 1933  
*PRACTICAL DISCOURSES*  
OF  
**SINGING**  
IN THE  
Worship of GOD;

Preach'd at the *Friday Lecture* in  
EASTCHEAP.

---

By Several MINISTERS.

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Isa. LII. 8. *Thy Watchmen shall lift up the Voice, with the Voice together shall they sing.*

---

*L O N D O N ;*

Printed by J. Darby for N. Cliff at the *Golden Candlestick*, the lower End of *Cheapside*,  
near the *Old Jury*; and J. Philips at the  
*Bull*, next Door to the *Fleece-Tavern* in  
*Cornhill*. M. DCC. VIII.

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## THE PREFACE.

THE Duty of Singing  
in the Worship of  
God had been very  
much neglected and unskilfully  
perform'd among our selves,  
in comparison of the greater  
Knowledg and better Care of  
the foreign Churches; till  
some late Attempts were set on  
foot to teach the Art, and in-  
courage the Practice.

Among other Designs of this Nature, the Week-day Lecture, at which the following Sermons were preach'd, and that has been continu'd several Years for the Service of Religion, and particularly the Encouragement of Singing, has not been the least considerable, nor the least serviceable and successful.

And as we thought fit at some time or other to consider a Subject, as much neglected as the Practice, and as rarely handled as it was generally ill perform'd; so we thought it could be no where more proper than at such a Place. And tho they were first undertaken, and now publish'd at the Desire

fire of the Gentlemen that encourage and support it, and for their particular Use; yet we think our selves concern'd to declare, That as we profess to follow the Guidance of no other Spirit but that of God, nor to be of any Party but that of all serious Christians; so they are sincerely directed to the common Benefit, and have no lower or more confin'd an Aim, than the Satisfaction and Assistance of all the Serious and Sincere.

Many of our Reverend Fathers employ'd excellent Pains in the several Volumes of the Morning-Lectures that were devoted to the Service of Practical Religion, instead of meddling with the angry Dis-

putes, and the hurtful Quarrels of the Times ; and have been very useful to the World : and we thought it no way improper or unsuitable to the Character and Circumstance of younger Ministers, to be willing to serve so excellent an Interest ; and hope we may move in this lower Sphere without any just Censure.

It will be necessary to observe, That tho' the present Discourses may not be so uniform and of a Piece, or wrought off with so even a Thred, as if compos'd by a single Hand ; like the different Colourings of several Hands in a Picture : yet they have upon that Account their Advantage and

and Convenience too. For tho  
the same things happen some-  
times to be said by several,  
yet they are always directed to  
a different Purpose, and ex-  
prest in a different Manner.  
And it may be some Gratifi-  
cation to the innocent Curiosity,  
as well as some Help to the  
real Benefit of the serious Rea-  
der, to see the same things  
held in a different Light, and  
cloth'd in a different Dress ;  
and may give the greater Ad-  
vantage to the Evidence and  
Beauty of Divine Truth. So  
that what is wanting in the Sym-  
metry of Parts, or Equality of  
Stile, is made up in the Plea-  
sure of Variety ; like the grate-  
ful **Confusion** of different  
Flowers

*Flowers in a pleasant Field,  
or the pleasing Harmony aris-  
ing from the Composition of  
several Sounds.*

We shall only add, That if we had known any thing so distinctly writ upon the Subject, form'd out of the Scripture, and fitted for common Use, we should have thought the present Undertaking the less necessary. And we are willing to hope it may not be wholly fruitless, and without Success, as we earnestly desire it may be attended with the Divine Blessing.

London, Feb. 13.

1707.

THE

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## BOOKS

## ERRATA.

PAG. 23. lin. penult. for δη read Δη.  
24. lin. 6. for χαονια read χθονια.  
102. r. 227.

BOOKS Printed for and Sold  
by John Phillips, at the Black  
Bull, next the Fleece-Tavern, o-  
ver against the Royal Exchange  
in Cornhil.

C. Julius Cæsar's Commentarys on his  
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Divine Baptismal Spirit ; wherein is  
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T H E

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THE  
NATURE  
Of the Duty of  
SINGING.

---

SERMON I.

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COL. III. 16. —Teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs ; singing with Grace in your Hearts to the Lord.

**D**esigning to give some Account of the *Nature* of Singing, consider'd as a Branch of Christian Worship, by way of Introduction

Serm. I. tio[n] to the following Discourses, I  
 have chosen these Words as the Foundation of what I have to offer upon that Matter, and shall in a few words shew their Relation to the Context.

In the foregoing Chapters the Apostle asserts the great Truths of the Gospel, and in this begins a practical Exhortation, grounded upon what he had been there establishing : From the Consideration of what he had there said, pressing Heavenly-mindedness and Mortification, from *Verse 1.* to *12.* from whence to the *16th,* he urges to the particular Dutys of Charity, Peace and Thankfulness ; and as a Means in order hereto directs the diligent Study of the Scriptures, which duly entertain'd are able to make us *wise unto Salvation* ; and particularly enjoins the Singing of *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*, as tending to promote the Interest of Holiness in our Hearts and Lives..

*2 Tim. III.  
16.*

In the Words we have the Act, the Object, the Manner, and the End of the mention'd Duty ; from the joint

# *the Duty of SINGING.*

3

joint Consideration whereof we Serm. I.  
may form a Definition of it, as ~~as~~  
exact as we are concern'd to have.

I. The *Act* is *Singing*; the general Notion of which is *speaking musically*: and I should but abuse your Patience in detaining you, while I insisted more largely upon a matter which is so obvious to the meanest Understanding.

II. The *Object* is *Psalms, Hymns*, and *Spiritual Songs*. How these are distinguish'd I cannot tell, and shall not trouble you with the Opinions of others. In this they all agree, That they are Words so compos'd, as to be fit for Singing; which is the proper Notion of what we call *Verse* or *Metre*.

But tho' the Object of Singing in general be *Poetical Composures*, or *Words* set to Tunes, I need not tell you that the Object of Singing, as it is an *Act* of Religious Worship, is *Divine and Spiritual Songs*, i. e. Composures which contain a Divine or Spiritual Sense, whose subject Matter is God, his Nature,

Serm. I. Perfections, and wonderful Works,  
according to the Discovery which  
he has made of himself in his  
Word, which we call the Scrip-  
tures of the Old and New Testa-  
ment.

And I conceive that whatever  
Songs are Scriptural are the pro-  
per Object of Singing, as it is un-  
der present Consideration; espe-  
cially those which treat of Christ  
and the Benefits of his Redemp-  
tion. For I can by no means be  
of their mind, who in the public  
Congregations would confine us to  
that Collection of the *Jewish Psal-  
mody*, which is call'd the *Psalms of  
David*, for Reasons which I must  
not give, because I am not allow'd  
to invade another's Province. I  
come next,

III. To the *Manner* of Singing;  
and tho what I have here to pro-  
pose will fall under the Consid-  
eration of him whose business it is  
to give Directions, yet I am neces-  
sarily oblig'd to mention some  
things under this Head, because in  
all Moral and Religious Actions  
the

the Manner of Performance is an essential Part, and the Neglect of it will, in the sight of God, denominate that Trifling and Hypocrisy, which Men would have pass for Divine Service or Worship. Therefore,

§. 1. It must be *with Grace in the Heart.* There must be a Concurrence of Heart and Voice. God does indeed require the *Calves of Hos. XIV.* *the Lips*, but mere Praises will not be an acceptable sacrifice. Therefore *David* calls upon his Soul to *bless the Lord*, and all that was *within him to bless God's holy Name.* Agreeably to which the Apostle directs, that we should *make melody Eph. V. 19.* in our *Hearts to the Lord.* And indeed it is a rul'd Case, that *bo-dily Exercise profiteth little.* Now Singing with **Grace** in the Heart may imply as follows:

(1.) That he that sings be a gracious Person, or a good Man. We know that *God heareth not Sinners*, is a Maxim applicable to the present Case. *The Prayer of the Wicked is an Abomination*, and his Praises can't be acceptable. Yea,

Serm. I. it must needs be a provoking thing  
 to a holy and jealous God, for  
 those to sing his Praises that de-  
 pise his Government, and hate his  
 Laws. Such People do but *lye unto*  
*him with their Mouths, and flatter*  
*him with their Lips.* And even a  
 Man of common Discretion would  
 less resent the Curses of an Ene-  
 my, than open and notorious Flat-  
 tery. It is mocking and insulting  
 the great God, for Men at once  
 to praise his Name, and live in an  
 habitual Defiance of him. It is a

**Ps. XXII.** *Holy God that inhabits the Praises*  
 3. *of Israel: and therefore we should*  
*resolve as David did, I will wash*

**Ps. XXVI.** *my hands in Innocence, and so will I*  
 6, 7. *compass thine Altar, O Lord: That*  
*I may publish with the Voice of*  
*Thanksgiving, and tell of all thy*  
*wondrous Works.*

(2.) It must be in the lively  
 Exercise of particular *Graces*; as,  
 . [1.] *Knowledg.* A Man must  
 understand and actually consider  
 what he says, when he sings the  
**Ps. XLVII.** *Praises of God: Sing ye Praises*  
 7. *with Understanding.* Otherwise  
 what he does is no more an Act  
 of

## the Duty of SINGING.

7

of Worship or Devotion, than Serm. I.  
the Noise of a musical Instrument. ~~~~~  
He is properly but as sounding <sup>1Cor.XIII</sup> Brass, and a tinkling Cymbal.

[2.] Faith. For without Faith it  
is impossible to please God. And he Heb.XI.6.  
that comes to him must believe that  
he is, and that he is a Rewarder of all  
them that diligently seek him.

[3.] Love. This is the first and  
great Commandment, Thou shalt love <sup>Mat.XXII.</sup>  
the Lord thy God with all thy Heart,  
&c. Accordingly it is to be re-  
garded as the Spring of all accep-  
table Obedience: and surely Praise  
must be a cold and nauseous thing,  
if it don't flow from a Heart fill'd  
with Gratitude and sincere Affec-  
tion. If there bea't inward De-  
sire, Delight, and Admiration,  
Songs of Praise are empty and in-  
significant Things; especially con-  
sidering that God is not to be  
impos'd upon: but *all things are* <sup>Heb.IV.</sup>  
*naked and open in his sight with whom*  
*we have to do.*

[4.] Humility. Tho Custom  
has not made it usual to kneel in  
Singing as in Praying, yet an e-  
qual Prostration of Soul becomes

Serm. I. us in both, considering what an infinite Distance there is between us and the Object of our Songs, and how he is exalted far above all Blessing and Praise, the Hallelujahs of the Angels as well as the Hosannahs of the Saints : Especially remembering that we are Sinners, and so deserve to be in that place where the Circumstances of the miserable Inhabitants extort weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, instead of Praise and joyful Acclamations.

Eph. III.  
21.

§. 2. It must be in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ ; ver. 17. *Giving thanks unto the Father by him.* Parallel to this is that of the Apostle, *Unto him be Glory in the Church by Christ Jesus.* The Import of this Expression is, that our Praises must be offer'd up to God thro the Mediation of Christ, whose Intercession procures Acceptance for our Praises as well as Prayers. The same Hand must present, and the same Incense perfume both.

IV. The

IV. The *End* of Singing is two-fold : The Glory of God, and mutual Edification.

§. 1. The *Glory* of God. This is the ultimate End of a Christian in all his Actions, and especially Religious ; *Who so offereth Praise,* Ps. L. ult. *glorifies me.* I need not tell you, that we can't make God more glorious than he is necessarily, essentially, and eternally ; but by praising God, we acknowledg and proclaim his Glory.

§. 2. Mutual *Edification* ; and particularly,

(1.) *Instruction* and *Admonition* ; *Teaching* and *admonishing one another*, &c. Now this End is admirably answer'd by Psalms, Hymns, and Songs, in which important Truths are many times most agreeably propos'd, more easily impress'd, and better remember'd than otherwise. Upon which account it has been usual in all Ages, even those most remote from the present time, and in all places where there has been any Religion profess'd, or publick

Serm. I. Worship paid to a Superior Being,  
to deliver what they counted sacred Mysterys in Verse, and to set that Verse to Tunes. But this needs not be insisted on.

(2.) *Comfort.* According to that,  
*Is any man afflicted? let him pray:*  
*Is any merry? let him sing Psalms.*

But as all these things will fall in under other Heads, I am allow'd only to mention 'em; and that seems sufficient to answer my Design, which was to show the Nature of the *Ordinance.*

From what has been said, I might draw several useful Inferences; but considering that my Discourse is but introductory to the rest, I shall only mention two or three things, to which the General Heads fairly lead me: As,

i. That our Singing should be as *musical* as may be: For tho where God has deny'd a Voice or an Ear, he will not require what he has not given, yet surely we shou'd serve him with the best we have, and improve every Talent to the best advantage, seeing we must

must account for it: and we may Serm. I.  
imagine what the Consequences of ~~our Neglect~~ will be, if we consider  
that awful Text, *Cursed be the De-* Mal. I. 14.  
*ceiver which hath in his Flock a Male,*  
*and voweth and sacrificeth unto the*  
*Lord a corrupt thing.* Indeed our  
best shall be accepted, be it ever  
so mean; but nothing less shall  
be regarded, be it ever so good.  
And the Reason is obvious; be-  
cause to put off God with any  
thing short of the best, must needs  
be a high Affront to him, who is  
infinitely exalted *above all Blessing*  
*and Praise*, and deserves infinitely  
better from us than our best can  
be. It's true, the Musick of our  
Voice is a matter of less impor-  
tance than the Melody of our  
Heart, but not therefore to be  
neglected; because a very minute  
Circumstance may be expressive of  
a great deal of Duty or Disobe-  
dience, as sufficiently appears in  
the Case of our first Parents. In  
a word, I may apply to the pre-  
sent Case that of our Lord in ano-  
ther; *These ought ye to have done, Luke XI.*  
*and not left the other undone:* and 42.

lay

Serm. I. lay the stress of what I have said  
 upon that of the Apostle, *Glorify*  
*1 Cor. VI.* *God in your Body, and in your Spi-*  
*20.* *rits, which are his.*

2. If the Object of Singing is Scriptural Songs, then undoubtedly we must not mingle our own *Inventions, Fancys, and private Opinions*, with the great and obvious Truths of the Gospel, in those Composures which we sing in the Worship of God.. And I think this sufficiently intimated in the Text; *Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, Hymns, and spiritual Songs.* If men don't in every Ordinance keep to this Rule, *to the Law and to the Testimony*, their Sacrifices cannot be acceptable, but must fall under *Mat. XV. 9.* that Censure, *In vain do they worship me.* And this is one Abomination in the Church of *Rome*, that they sing not only what is unscriptural, but antifscriptural too, yea infinitely absurd and ridiculous; as I might shew by Instances enough to enlarge this Discourse into a Volume.

Tu per  
Thomæ  
Sancti-  
zem, &c.

3. If

3. If the Manner of Performance be with Grace in our Hearts, then we must see to it that we be sincerely devoted to that God whose Praises we sing, and not sing the Lord's Songs with unhallow'd Lips. We must also endeavour to have every Grace (as before mention'd) in its proper and lively Exercise, and tune our Hearts as well as Voices. We must offer a reasonable Service, understand and attend to the Sense of what we sing, lest we be no wiser than the Fowls of the Heaven, who sing they know not what. We must set our selves as in the Presence of the All-seeing God, that a Sense of his Inspection may awe us into a decent Reverence, and make us watch against every thing unsuitable to the Solemnity of Worship, and impertinent to the Business before us: Believing and being firmly persuaded, that as we must account for every Action in general, whether good or bad, so in a very particular manner for every Act of Worship; and that of every idle Word we must give an account

Serm. I. in the Day of Judgment to him who  
taketh no pleasure in Fools. Let us  
have an eye to the Recompence of Re-  
ward, as those who believe that  
the Care and Pains we take in the  
lowest Instance of Duty, shall in no  
wise lose its Reward. Let us think  
with our selves, that while we  
are conscientiously singing the Prai-  
ses of God in his Church below,  
we are training up for that better  
World, where everlasting Joy shall  
be upon our Heads, and our Mouths  
eternally fill'd with the high Prai-  
ses of our God; and not forget  
to consider what a dreadful thing  
it will be, to have our Crys and  
Wailings in Hell receive a higher  
Accent from our Hypocritical  
Songs of Praise on Earth. Let us  
also see to it, that we sing the  
Praises of God in the Exercise of  
Holy Love, that every Breath be  
warm'd with that holy Flame, and  
a devout Aspiration attend every  
Word we utter. Thus David be-  
gins that lofty Song of Praise,  
Psal. XVIII. *I will love thee, O Lord,*  
*my Strength:* and so should every  
Psalm of Praise we sing, deserve  
the

the Title of a *Song of Loves*. Thus Serm. I.  
will the Employment be delightful to our selves, and grateful to God ; <sup>Psal.XLV.</sup> <sub>Title.</sub>

*Cheat the Heart both of God and Man.*

Finally, Let us join *Humility* to the other Graces, remembering what a Majesty we approach, what unworthy Creatures we are, and how sorry things our Offerings be. Herein imitating those glorious Creatures, with whom we one day hope to join in eternal Hallelujahs ; who *cover their Faces and Feet*, Isa.VI.2,3. when they cry, *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God*, &c.

And this Humility will make us come in the *Name* of Jesus, under a sense of our own Unworthiness, and a Persuasion that the Holy God can accept of nothing from the hands of such abominable Wretches as we are, but thro the Merits and Intercession of him, *whom the Father heareth always.*

4. From what has been said of the End, we may infer our Obligation to aim at the *Glory* of God in this Duty ; that we do it to the *Lord* : That we despise and abhor

Serm. I. abhor the Thoughts of driving  
 ~~~~on any base or mean Designs un-  
 der the cover of the choicest De-  
 votion: That we don't *for a pre-  
 tence* multiply our Songs of Praise,  
 as the Pharisees lengthen'd out  
 their Prayers, lest we receive, as  
 they, *greater Damnation.*

And seeing mutual Edification  
 is another End we are to aim at,  
 I shall here take leave to advise  
 that our Singing be with a dis-  
 tinct and *audible* Voice, without  
 which it should seem that End  
 can't be answer'd. How can  
 Men be affected with an indis-  
 tinct Murmur, or how shall they  
 know we do really join in prai-  
 sing God, while we speak only  
 to our selves? Indeed the Heart  
 may be right, and God princi-  
 pally regards *its* Melody: but  
 unless we sing (as far as the Na-  
 ture of the thing will bear) so  
 as to be understood by others,  
 or to have them satisfy'd that  
 we go along with them; I may  
 justly apply what the Apostle  
 speaks against praying in an un-  
 known Tongue, We speak into  
 Cor.XIV. the  
 16, 17.

the Air : Our Spirit indeed sings, Serm. I.  
but our Understanding is unfruitful. We should therefore sing with the Spirit, and sing with Understanding ; i.e. so as to be understood by others. And therefore as we should be cautious not to confound others by an unseemly Noisiness, so we should extend our Voice to the most convenient degree we are able ; and not under a Pretence of Modesty baulk the great End of the Institution. The Levites prais'd <sup>1 Chron.</sup> the Lord, the God of Israel, with <sup>XX. 19.</sup> a loud Voice on high ; and Paul and Silas sung so loud, that the <sup>Acts XVI.</sup> <sup>25.</sup> *Pri-  
soners heard 'em.*

5. To conclude : If God in this, as well as other Ordinances, looks so much to the Heart, and expects to be worship'd *in Spirit and in Truth*, what need have we to watch our own Spirits, and pray for his ? We had need take all the Pains, and use all the Application possible ; and finding all that insufficient, we must have recourse to a better Strength than our own, praying that our Hearts may

Serm. I. may be set in Tune by the *Finger of God*; and joining with the Psalmist, say, *Open thou my Lips, and my Mouth shall shew forth thy Praise.*

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ARGU-

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## ARGUMENTS for the Duty of SINGING.

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### SERMON II.

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PSAL. CV. 2.

*Sing unto him, sing Psalms unto  
him.*

THE Occasion of this Psalm may be gather'd from 1 Chron. XVI. 7. there we find it was put into the hands of *Asaph and his Brethren* by *David*: They had brought the *Ark* of God into its Resting-place, and then gave out themselves to the view of a long and quiet Settlement. We may observe this, that it was first admitted as a Part of Worship with

Serm. II. with the nearest regard to their  
own Felicity, and afterwards em-  
body'd in the Collection of *Psalms*,  
that it might be of universal Ser-  
vice. This, I think, is very clear  
under the Protection of this one  
Argument, *viz.* That the Song  
which we read entire in the Book  
of *Chronicles*, is broke and divi-  
ded to make up several Parts of  
*Psalms*, that seem to be more un-  
confin'd and popular. The be-  
ginning of it we meet with in this  
CVth Psalm, what follows is dis-  
pos'd of into the XCVth; one  
Verse lies often in our way, par-  
ticularly in the CXVIIIth and  
CXXXVIth, and well it may, for  
it is the Summary of Praise; *Give*  
*Thanks to God, for he is Good, for*  
*his Mercy endures for ever.* The  
concluding Petition is the same  
with what you find in the CVIth  
Psalm; and the Doxology, the  
close of Joy, we meet with both  
here and in another Psalm that is  
compos'd with a direct view of  
that Mediator, who took upon him  
*the Seed of Abraham.* The same  
devotional Language which they  
us'd

us'd at bringing home the Ark, Serm. II. serves an higher purpose, and is the breathing of Faith and Joy to him who was *greater than the Temple*. This will appear if you unite Psal. LXXII. 18, 19. in the same view with Psal. CVI. 48. These things will vindicate our Application of an Old Testament Advice to these *last days*, in which God is speaking to us by his Son. 'Tis true, there's the distance of a great many Ages between the Time of such Exhortation and ours, upon whom the ends of the Earth are come; but it reaches us without any Decay or Wast of Argument, and I will dare to deliver it in those Terms to every one that's Partaker of the *Heavenly Calling*; Arise, for the matter belongs unto thee.

This is the Design that I have in the choice of this Text, and that you had in directing me to a part of Service among you; I'm to establish the Truth and Obligation of a great Ordinance, and show what a rightful Claim it has upon those who would walk worthy of God unto all pleasing. **SINGING**  
his

Serm. II. his Praise appears to be a Duty  
from these four Springs of Argument ; The Light of Nature, The Commands of the Word, The Examples of God's People, and The Work of the Holy Spirit within us.

I. It may be prov'd from that *natural* and common *knowledg* of things which God has bestow'd upon Mankind at large. Revelation produces it in a better Light, and strikes deeper into the Conscience ; but yet the Duty it self is of a more diffusive kind, and takes the same Compass with human Reason. I will mention three things under this Head, which will fill up the Argument.

§. 1. 'Tis promoted by those *Works of Greatness* and Mercy that lie open to an universal Remark. David calls in the Heathen World to bear a Part in this great  
**PL.CXVII** sort ; *Praise him all ye Nations, praise him all ye People.* 'Tis a common Duty, and includes the whole rational Nature : *Let the Nations be glad and sing for Joy.*  
— Let

— Let the People praise thee O God, Serm. II.  
 let all the People praise thee. Tho' ~~the~~<sup>Ps. LXVII.</sup>  
 the Mysterys of Redemption are unknown among 'em, so that they <sup>4, 5.</sup>  
 cannot think of God's loving kind- psal.  
 ness in the midst of his Temple; yet <sup>XLVIII. 9.</sup>  
 Creation and Providence give 'em  
 the Memorials of a Deity, and  
 those may touch their Joys in a  
 fainter way: for according to God's <sup>Ver. 10.</sup>  
 Name, so is his Praise to the Ends of  
 the Earth, and his right Hand is  
 full of Righteousness. What may be <sup>Rom. I. 19,</sup>  
 known of him is manifest in them, <sup>20.</sup>  
 for he has shown it to 'em; and the  
 invisible things of him from the Cre-  
 ation of the World are clearly seen by  
 the things that do appear, even his  
 Eternal Power and Godhead. This  
 is so noble an Argument to the  
 Work of Praise, that their Si-  
 lence falls under a severe Correc-  
 tion; they are said to be without <sup>Ver. 21.</sup>  
 Excuse, because that when they knew  
 God, they glorify'd him not as God.

Nature taught the Heathens to  
 sing the Praises of their Gods:

ΔΕῦτε διὰ ἐννέπετε σφέτερον πατέρον Hesiod.  
 ὑμνέσσαι,  
 Υμνεῖς Θεογονία, <sup>Ἐργα —</sup>

Serm. II.

'Υμεῦται διὰ ταῖς γόργον καὶ πότισαν Ἡέλω.

Theocrit.

— — — — — Ἀλλὰ σελανα  
Φαῖνε κυλόν. τίν ποταέστημαι  
ἄσυχα, δαίμον  
Τᾶς χθονίας θ' εκάτα. — — —

Idyl. 2.

v. 10.

De Musi-  
ca.Plutarch says, That Singing and  
Musick among the antient Greeks  
were wholly employ'd in the Wor-  
ship of their Gods; and laments  
their Profanation and Abuse in  
later times when they brought  
'em into the Theater.Eἰ γὰρ νῦν  
εἰχειν  
ἀλλὰ τι  
ἔδειημας  
ποιῶν καὶ  
χοινὶς οὐκ  
δια, οὐκ  
νεῖν τὸ  
θεῖον, &c.  
Arriani  
Epict. I. 1.  
c. 16.'Tis an admirable Expression of  
the Stoick Philosopher: " If we  
are wise, what is more properly  
our Business, in publick and  
private, than to sing Praises to  
the Deity ? Should not the La-  
bourer in the Field and at his  
Table sing an Hymn to God ? If  
I were a Nightingal, I would do  
as the Nightingals do ; if a  
Swan, as the Swans : but since I  
am a reasonable Creature, God  
must be prais'd by me ; I will  
never forsake the Practice my  
self, and I exhort all others to  
it.

The

The Apostate Emperor speaks Scrm.II.  
of fine *Hymns* consecrated to <sup>the</sup>  
the Gods, and advises them to be <sup>Juliani</sup>  
learn'd and remembred. <sup>Opera, p.</sup>  
<sup>301.</sup>

Many of the Scripture-Songs  
are rais'd upon a view of what  
God has done in Nature, things  
expos'd to an universal Admira-  
tion. David considers the Hea- Psal. VIII.  
vens as the Work of his Fingers, the 3, 4.  
Moon and the Stars that he had or-  
dain'd; and then says, Lord, what Job XXVI.  
is Man? 'Tis true, these are only 14.  
part of his ways, and we cannot see <sup>2</sup> Cor. IV.  
the Glory of God to any saving ad- 6.  
vantage, but in the face of Jesus  
Christ: however there are some  
Beams of Perfection shining out to  
them, who are Aliens from the Co-  
venant of Promise. For the Hea-  
vens declare the Glory of God, and Psal. XIX.  
the Firmament shows his handy-Work. 1, 2, 3, 4.  
Day unto Day utters Speech, and  
Night unto Night shows Knowledg.  
There is no Speech or Language where  
their Voice is not heard; for their  
Line is gone thro all the Earth, and  
their Words unto the end of the Psal. XXII.  
World. These are not so limited  
as the Statutes that he gave to Israh,

Serm.II. and the Commandments that were  
 ~~ only made known to *Israel*. Indeed they are a People most oblig'd  
 and prepar'd to the Service; but the Duty reaches further, and *David* owns this when he was solemnizing the peculiar Relation that God bore to the *Jews*. The XCVI<sup>th</sup> Psalm is a part of the Song that he gave out at the settling of the Ark, and yet then he looks be-

ps. XCVI. yond their own Nation: Fear before him all the Earth; say among the Heathen, that the Lord reigneth: the World also shall be establish'd, that it be not mov'd. They understand,

Heb.XI.3. tho it be not by the clearer views of Faith, that the Worlds were fram'd by the Word of God; so that the things that are seen were not made of things that do appear. And further,

They behold that part of his wonderful Works, which is most affecting to themselves. The Apostle comes down upon the Heathens Level, when he tells 'em of Act. XIV. the Times in which God suffer'd all 16, 17. Nations to walk in their own ways, and yet even then left not himself

without witness, but gave 'em Rain Serm.II.  
and fruitful Seasons, filling their       
Hearts with Food and Gladness. So  
that if we had no express Voice  
of Law or Gospel to make this  
our Duty, 'tis as much establish'd  
in the Rules of Nature as Prayer  
and Dependence upon God can be;  
and this is the Work of all Nations Act.XVII.  
of Men, who dwell on all the Face 26, 27, 28.  
of the Earth, that they should seek  
the Lord, if haply they might feel  
after him, and find him, tho he be  
not far from every one of us: for in  
him we live, and move, and have  
our Being. For this the Apostle  
brings in one of their own Poets,  
who said, *We are his Offspring.*

Necessity has this Virtue in it,  
to set us a crying after him, tho  
we should always have bin at a  
loss for the true Method of do-  
ing it, if Life and Immortality  
had not come to Light by the Gospel;  
yet every Admonition of Misery  
is a push to the thing it self. The  
Mariners who had got Jonah a-  
board were as loose and wild in  
their Notions of Worship as Peo-  
ple could be, when they cry'd every

Serm. II. *Man to his God*; but yet they have  
 some unpolish'd Thoughts of their  
 Jon. I. 5.

Rom. II.  
 14, 15.

Duty: They had an Opinion of Prayer as a way to escape. Thus *the Gentiles, who have not the Law, do by nature the things contain'd in the Law; and these, having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves, which show the Work of the Law to be written in their Hearts.* 'Tis the Parallel between one Ordinance and another, that I wou'd argue from: If mere Nature that surveys the Beauty of Creation and Providence, can show a God to our Hope in the time of need, it does equally oblige us to praise him for Mercys receiv'd. The Materials of the Service lie abroad, and may be fetch'd in from the common Favours of Life; for as

Job  
 XXXV. 10. *God our Maker he gives Songs in the Night.*

§. 2. This Duty is distinguish'd from those that were Ceremonial, and only a *shadow of good things to come.* The Jews had their Law in *Tables*, but their Gospel in *Figures*. Many parts of their Service were to declare and nourish the hopes of

a Messiah. The Adoption that per-Serm.II.  
 tain'd to 'em, the Glory, the Cove-<sup>~~~</sup>  
 nants, the giving of the Law, and the Rom. IX.  
 Promises, was because they were a 3, 4.  
 People, of whom as concerning the  
 Flesh Christ came. These had no  
 further value in them than as they  
 were establish'd by a temporary  
 Command, and pointed to that ri-  
 per Glory, those better things that Heb. XI.  
 God had reserv'd for us. But the ult.  
 Works that are purely moral are  
 oftentimes mention'd apart from  
 them; and when these two are  
 put into the Ballance, the Cha-  
 racter always weighs on one side:  
*The Lord has not so great Delight, Sim.*  
*in Burnt-Offering and Sacrifice, as XV. 22.*  
*in obeying the Voice of the Lord:*  
*behold, to obey is better than Sacrifice,*  
*and to hearken than the Fat of Rams.*  
 When he supposes an awaken'd  
 Conscience lamenting how insuffi-  
 cient Thousands of Rams, and Ten Mic. VI.8.  
 Thousand Rivers of Oil would be,  
 he puts a new credit upon those  
 parts of Obedience that are ever-  
 lasting and moral: *He has shown*  
*thee, O Man, what is good, and what*  
*the Lord thy God requires of thee.*

Serm. II. Of this kind are those Praises that  
 we offer to him in the Ordinance  
 of Singing. This is the plain  
 sense of *David*, tho he liv'd in an

Age when the Ceremonial Com-

ps. LXIX. mands had all their Force: *I will*

*30, 31. praise the Name of God with a Song,*  
*I will magnify him with Thanksgiving;*  
*this also shall please the Lord better*  
*than an Ox or Bullock that has Horns*  
*and Hoofs.*

'Tis not my Province to answer Objections, that's a Service better plac'd; but I cannot be passive to one that usually assaults this Argument. Some tell us, that we may as fairly conclude for the use of Instrumental Musick in the Worship of God, because the Jews often brought it in thither. I shall give a very easy and general Answer, which I hope may both break this Difficulty, and lead us into the true Nature of that Service we are now oblig'd to. 'Tis certain, most of their moral Dutys had a Tincture of Ceremony in 'em, because something further was requir'd of 'em besides an Obedience to the Law: There was the

hope

hope of the Promise made unto the Serm. II.  
Fathers ; unto which Promise the <sup>Acts</sup> ~~twelve~~ Tribes instantly serving God <sup>XXIV. 6,</sup>  
Day and Night hop'd to come. That <sup>7.</sup>  
this Expectation might be kept  
alive, they had the Figures and  
Shadows of the great Blessing uni-  
ted to their Services.' I will show  
you this in a parallel Case : Prayer  
to God is undoubtedly establish'd  
upon another foot than that of  
the Types and Ceremonys ; and  
yet they are so interwoven, that  
the Duty has a great deal peculiar  
in it, as it comes from them.  
There must be an Offering, their  
Faces are directed to the House  
which God had chosen to place his  
Name there. They had Seasons of  
doing it : *The multitudes stood pray-* Luk. I. 10.  
*ing without at the time of Incense.*  
We read of the *Hours of Prayer* : Act. III. I.  
They were to guard against all ce-  
remonial Impuritys ; and if any  
thing of this external Part was  
neglected, we sometimes find there's  
a frown of Providence to cloud  
the Work. God made a Breach  
upon David's Design, by striking  
Urza dead (tho it's probable there-

Serm. II. was a religious Temper among the  
 (People) because they sought him not  
 1 Chron. after a due Order. So that, to bring  
 XV. 13. up the Argument, if a Duty ceases  
 to be moral, because their way of  
 discharging it was peculiar, we  
 shall have the whole Character de-  
 stroy'd : no part of our Obedience  
 can possibly come under that name.  
 The distinction is very plain be-  
 tween this Ordinance we are now  
 defending, and those that are cal-  
 Heb. IX. led *carnal ones, impos'd on the Jews*  
 10. *till the time of the Reformation.*  
 When the Apostle writes to the  
 Church at *Coloss*, he makes it one  
 great part of his Advice to them,  
 Col. II. 16. that they be not entangled with  
*Meats and Drinks, or in respect of*  
*Holidays, or New Moons, or Sab-*  
*bath-Days*, which took up a migh-  
 ty room in the Jewish Worship ;  
 but they were only a shadow of  
 Ver. 20. good things to come, for the Body was  
*Christ, and they ought to be dead*  
*from the Rudiments of the World.*  
 And yet, after he had thus demo-  
 lish'd the whole Mass of Ceremo-  
 ny, in the very next Chapter he  
 Col. III. 16. directs 'em to *Psalms, and Hymns,*  
 and .

and spiritual Songs : which shows Serm. II. they are not to be thrown into the number of those Services that are purely Typical.

§. 3. *Human Nature* is fitted to this Work with an especial Design. The Faculty's of Enquiry, Meditation, Delight and Wonder, are to relish the Perfection and Bountys of a God, what he is in himself, and what he has done for us ; and the Tongue is *our Glory*, that Ps. xxx. we may sing *Praise*. We have a<sup>12</sup>. Capacity to the Service above what other Creatures can pretend to : Our Voices are pliable to Melody ; and how can that Beauty in the frame of them be better turn'd than to a decent and regular Performance of this Work ? And when any will be at Pains to have this Ordinance carry'd on with a becoining Sweetness, 'tis indeed a devoting the best Instrument of Nature to the best Employment of Grace. *Our Glory* is exerted, and *God's admir'd*. Satan's Artifice against this Duty shows it self two ways : On the one hand, he persuades a loose and careless

Serm. II. World, that there's nothing of  
 Harmony or Entertainment in it; and therefore if they would be  
 pleas'd in the sense of Hearing, they must go for it to those things  
 that are a long step from Religion. On the other hand, he attacks the  
 Ordinance with the Prejudice and Sourness of those who condemn  
 what they don't understand: and it's no wonder that a Service so  
 useful to the Christian is thus oppos'd. But certainly our having  
 Voices, that are capable of doing their Work with pleasure this way,  
 is both an Argument founded in Nature, and obliges to some Dilige-  
 nce for Qualification. We are

<sup>2 Chron.</sup> expressly told of those that taught  
 XXIII. 13 to sing Praise. Why is it that God

has ennobled us at such a Cost of Love, but that our Adorations  
 may be distinguish'd from the more silent ones that other Creatures

Psal. are giving? - The Sun, Moon, and

CXLVIII. Stars, Dragons, Deeps, Fire, Hail,  
 Snow, Wind and Vapoours, Mountains, Hills and Trees, Cattel, creep-  
 ing things and Fowl, prais. the Name  
 of the Lord, and his Glory, which

is above the Heavens. But we are Serm. II.  
to do it in another manner, as ~~~~~  
we have Souls to digest the Mate-  
rials, and peculiar Organs to give  
it vent : *With one Mind and one Rom. XV.  
Mouth we glorify God, even the Fa-6.  
ther of our Lord Jesus Christ.* There's  
something in our Make that's e-  
quivalent to an Institution ; these  
Capacitys of Preparation and Ut-  
terance are given us to carry on  
the Design : *My Lips shall greatly Ps. LXXI.  
rejoice when I sing unto thee, and my 23.  
Soul which thou hast redeem'd.*

II. This Duty is still more evi-  
dent from the positive Institutions  
of *God's Word*. I shall consider  
this Argument in two Parts, as it  
stands upon the *Foundation of the  
Prophets and Apostles*. In the Old  
Testament we find it commanded,  
us'd. and endear'd to our imitation  
from several Persons, but especially  
him who is call'd *the sweet  
Psalmist of Israel*. In the New we  
have the same Exhortations, to  
let us see that it's a continuing  
Ordinance ; and our Lord, *when he  
comes*, expects to find us so doing.

Serm.II. §. 1. I begin with that part of  
the Argument that is grounded on  
the *Old Testament*; and what De-  
mand returns so often as of our  
Service to God this way? No Call  
to any Duty is more repeated, es-  
pecially in the Book of Psalms.  
But because there's an Objection al-  
ways ready against those Exhorta-  
tions to Singing which we find  
in the Old Testament, I will only  
turn you to such Passages as are  
Prophetick of our Worship under  
the Gospel. This is universally  
own'd, that many things in those  
times were written in a view of  
this last Dispensation. The Spirit

1 Pet. I.  
32.

in the Prophets testify'd, that not un-  
to themselves, but unto us they did  
minister the things that are now re-  
ported. From several of these  
Scriptures, it appears with the  
best Conviction to me, that God  
design'd to have singing of Psalms  
a part in his Worship now.

Yer. 5.

The XLVIIth Psalm has a great  
deal in it that looks at these *last*  
*days*, wherein God has *spoken to us*  
*by his Son*. He is said to *go up with*  
*a shout*; this was *true of our Medi-*  
*ator*,

ator, when the Father rais'd him up Serm.II.  
from the Dead, and gave him Glory. <sup>1 Pet. I. 21.</sup>

Again, we there read that God <sup>1 Pet. I. 21.</sup>  
reigns over the Heathen, and the Ver. 8, 9.  
Princes of the People are gather'd,  
even (or as it is in the Margin un-  
to) the People of the God of Abra-  
ham.. And the reason he gives for  
it leads us into such a sense of the  
words, because the Shields of the  
Earth belong unto God, and he is  
greatly exalted. What a beautiful  
account is this of the Success the  
Gospel had, and the Blessing of A-Gal.III. 4.  
braham that came on the Gentiles  
thro Christ ? Now, in this Psalm,  
we are commanded to shout unto  
God, to sing Praises, to do it with  
Understanding : The Call is repea-  
ted several times, which lets us  
see what our Work shou'd be when  
these glorious things took place.  
The LXVIIIth Psalm so plainly re-  
fers to Christ, that the Apostle Eph. IV.  
gives us the very words of it, in  
telling us, that he ascended up on  
high, &c. And this Exhortation  
is mingled in the several parts of  
that account, that we sing unto  
him that rides on the Heavens; and Ver. 4.  
particu-

ARGUMENTS for  
Serm. II. particularly the *Heathen*, who were  
once rebellious, are charg'd to do  
v. 32, 33. it, because he receiv'd Gifts for  
them. Sing unto God, ye Kingdoms  
of the Earth.

The XCVth Psalm is almost re-peated in the IIId and IVth Chapters to the *Hebrews*: From thence the Apostle fetches his Exhortations, to hear God's Voice, and believe his Word; which shows that it contains those Rules of Duty that we are to be guided by in the days of the Son of Man; and there we are call'd to come before his Presence with Thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with Psalms.

We have a cloud of Witnesses from the Prophets, who foretold the Grace that should come unto us. The Conversion of the Gentiles is express'd in this Language, That  
 If. XXXV. they shou'd come to Sion with Songs,  
 10. &c. They shall sing for the Majesty  
 Isa. LI. 11. of the Lord. Songs shall be heard  
 Isa. XXIV. from the uttermost parts of the Earth,  
 14, 15. even Glory to the Righteous. And in  
 Ch. XLII. another place, The Ends of the  
 Earth, the Inhabitants of the Rock  
 are

are to give Glory to the Lord, and Serm. II. they must declare his Praise in the ~~W~~ Islands. The Preaching and Conquest of the Gospel is meant by publishing glad Tydings, and saying Rom. x. unto Sion, Thy God reigneth : And 15. when this is the Happiness of any People, they shall lift up the Voice, Isa. LII. and with the Voice together they sing : 8, 9. They break forth into Joy, and sing together, when the Lord has made bare his holy Arm in the Eyes of all Nations, and all the Ends of the Earth come to see the Salvation of God. Time would fail me to bring in all that we meet with to this purpose; I will only sum up the Argument, That if God design'd to abolish this Ordinance, and rase it out of his Worship, we can scarce think that he would have put the Duty and Joys of a Gospel-day into such Language.

§. 2. I proceed to those Commands that we have in the New Testament; and these are plain enough to carry their own Evidence. The first I shall mention you have Eph. V. 19. Speaking, ~~taulōs~~, to your selves (or to one another) in Psalms, and

Serm.II. and *Hymns, and spiritual Songs;*  
 singing and making melody in your  
 heart to the Lord. 'Tis apparent  
 by this Scripture, that a secret Joy  
 in God doth not come up to the  
 Design of the Exhortation. A  
 devout and warm Resentment of  
 his Goodness to us is the Soul of  
 all Duty, but this is not speaking  
 in Psalms : The Phrase of the Ad-  
 vice lets us see that it must be dif-  
 ferent from Meditation, where  
 the Soul is purely retir'd into it  
 self, and shuts out the whole Crea-  
 tion. The *Melody in the Heart* is  
 no Censure of the Voice : It only  
 tells us, that besides the Pleasuré  
 of regular Sounds, we must have  
 our Affections rais'd with the Sub-  
 stance and Matter of what is sung :

Ps.CIII. i. That *our Souls and all that is within*  
*us may praise the Lord*; lest we  
 fall under the Misery of those  
 Isa.XXIX who honour him with their Lips,  
 13. but remove their Hearts far from  
 him.

Another Scripture, which is  
 much to the same purpose, you  
 have, Col. III. 16. *Let the Word of*  
*God dwell in you richly in all Wis-*  
*dom,*

dom, teaching and admonishing Serm.II.  
(aujois) one another in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs; singing with Grace in your Hearts unto the Lord. The Word that was translated *your selves* in the other place, is here produc'd in its true and genuine Sense. The Context to each of these Scriptures is fill'd with Directions for general Service; the Advice in both of 'em is almost the same, only here we are bid to *let the Word of God dwell richly in us*; which answers the Design of this Ordinance two ways: *First*, as we are thereby the readier at accommodating the Psalms to our own or others occasions; and, *Secondly*, as it enlarges the Mind to understand and apply what we meet with in that great Bank of Experience. *My Lips shall praise thee*, says David, Ps.CXIX. when thou hast taught me thy Statutes. This will help us to find our own case in those Psalms, that look as if they were either personal, or wrapt up in Judaisms. When the Word of God dwells thus richly in us, it will form the Thoughts

Serm. II. Thoughts to a greater compass,  
and teach us to compare spiritual  
Rom. XV. things with spiritual : for whatsoever  
3. was written aforetime is for our Ad-  
monition. We shall be Partners  
with David in his Afflictions, and  
taste his Comforts as if they had  
been our own at the first hand.

Isa. LV. 3. And indeed the Everlasting Cove-  
nant that God makes with us, is  
no other than the sure Mercys of  
David. This will lead us with-  
in the Vail of Ceremony : By  
knowing the Fitness of the Types  
to their Substance, we shall not  
have our Thoughts shackled with  
the Phrase ; but know that those  
Passages which seem to be of the  
narrowest meaning, and most con-  
fin'd to that Age, have a Gospel-  
Sense and Beauty in 'em.

Another Command you find  
Jam. V. 13. *Is any afflicted? let him  
pray: Is any merry? let him sing  
Psalms.* Perhaps the Word in our  
Translation is a little too light for  
the Frame of Spirit here design'd.  
It expresses a Temper that's very  
becoming those who are *Heirs of  
the Grace of Life*, and shou'd re-  
joice

joice evermore, being not appointed Serm. II.  
unto Wrath, but to obtain Salvation! ~~~~~  
by Jesus Christ. So that the usual  
Answer to this is frivolous, that  
it's a Duty only for those who  
are joyful: They may as well af-  
firm, that Prayer obliges no fur-  
ther than when Affliction has gone  
before. The latter part of the  
Verse is no more limited than the  
former. Several Psalms are the  
Breathings of David's Spirit un-  
der his Distress. The CII is call'd  
*A Prayer of the Afflicted, when he  
is overwhelm'd, and pours out his  
Complaint before the Lord.* There  
was in those Believers a Love to  
God and a Hope in him, to gild  
the Darkness of Providence; and  
should not the Christian be ac-  
quainted with these in all his Ad-  
versitys? The Exhortation there-  
fore stands unshaken; *Sing unto the Ps. XXX.*  
*Lord, ye Saints of his, for his Anger 4, 5.*  
endures but for a moment; in his Fa-  
vour is Life: Wespung may be for a  
night, but Joy comes in the morning.  
Who's to blame that we are not  
in a Temper for the Duty? Is  
our Sadness so irregular and vio-  
lent,

Serm. II. lent, that we refuse to be comforted? Had we rather allow an Unruliness of Grief, and charge God foolishly, than take the Methods of Composure that he has directed us to? Never let that be an Excuse, which in most cases is it self a Crime; but beg rather, that God

Ps. LI. 15. would put you into Tune: *Open thou my Lips, and my Mouth shall shew forth thy Praise.* Perhaps there's a Cloud upon your Comforts at present; but have you no *Hope towards God, or Delight in his Promises?* Look forwards, and

Ps. XCVI. rejoice before him, because he will  
23. come to judg the Earth with Righteousness, and his People with Truth. Afflictions don't deserve to hinder

Phil. IV. 6. you: Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by Prayer, and Supplication, and (this Method of) Thanksgiving, make your Requests known unto God.

III. We are directed by Example to this Duty. These things are recorded for our Admonition, upon whom the Ends of the Earth are come. The Historys of God's People

People are not a dry Entertain- Serm.II.  
ment ; they don't tell us matters ~~as~~ remote and foreign : but they are either a Test to show us what we are, or a Rule to tell us what we should be. I'll begin with the *original Pattern* : We find our blessed Lord employ'd in singing the Praises of the Father. 'Tis true, a great part of his Duty is recorded for our Hope and Wonder, and engages to no Imitation ; such as his working Miracles, suffering the Wrath of God, satisfying the Law, by which he *brought in an Everlasting Righteousness*. These are not our Rule, but the Refuge we must flee to, the *Hope that is set before us*. He trod the Wine-press *Isa.LXIII.* alone, and of the People there was <sup>3</sup> none with him. But as to the Purity and Devotion of his Life, we should be *Followers of him as dear Eph.IV.1. Children*. Now when he was to part with his Disciples, and took leave in an Ordinance that should continue till they met again, *he sung an Hymn with 'em*. This could not be merely in compliance with the Jewish Custom at the Pasover ;

Serm. II. sover; for that Solemnity expir'd  
then, and he had appointed another *in remembrance* of himself and his second Coming. His Soul was full of holy Reverence and Love to the Father. He knew the Work of Redemption was now almost finish'd; and as this would engage the Songs of Heaven, so he employs his Voice in the Service of his Heart: He glorifies God both in Spirit and Body, as was

Ps. LXV. 2. becoming one who had *Grace pour'd into his Lips.* Those words of David were eminently design'd for

Ps. XL. 3. him; *The Lord has put a new Song into my mouth, even Praise to our God.* This, I say, was his Language, who said afterwards, *Lo, I come; in the Volume of thy Book it is written of me.* This is the Example that he has left for us to follow his steps.

David's Practice in this Duty makes a whole Book. I know how quick some People are with their Objection, That our Case is not his; but I don't see how that's any bar to the concurrence of Faith and Hope with his Meditations. Nothing could be more per-

personal than the changing his Behaviour before Abimelech ; and yet upon that occasion he desires others to magnify the Lord with him, and that they might exalt his Name together. And we find his Psalms us'd by People who were remov'd the length of several Ages from him. Hezekiah, and such as join'd in the Passover with him, prais'd the Lord with the Words of David, and Asaph the Seer : and they sung Praises with gladness, and bow'd their Heads and worship'd. We find the same upon another eminent Turn of Providence ; They prais'd God after the Ordinance of David King of Israel. The Apostles and holy Men of God in later times were thus employ'd. Paul and Silas sung Praises to God in the Stocks : The Multitude of the Disciples, and others, did it, when Christ made his publick Entry into Jerusalem. And when the Apostle is giving Directions about the Conduct of our publick Worship, he speaks of himself, I will sing with the Spirit, and with Understanding also. Nay, methinks, we may look

Serm. II. look much higher for Examples:  
 ~~~~~ This was the Work of the Angels;

Job XXXVIII 7. When the Foundations of the Earth were laid, the Morning-Stars sung together, and all the Sons of God shouted for Joy.

Eph. v.  
3, 4.

IV. There's something in our Frame and Composition as Christians, that may endear this Ordinance to us. Fornication, Uncleanness, Covetousness, Filthiness, and foolish Talking are not to be nam'd among us, as becometh Saints; but rather giving of thanks.

Deut. XXXI. 19

§. 1. 'Tis a means of further Instruction. Moses writ a Song, which must not depart from the mouths of the Children of Israel, lest they should forget the wonderful Works of God. We speak to our selves, and admonish one another in Psalms and Hymns. This gives the Mind an advantage to dwell upon the things of God with a pleasing Meditation; and, in this sense,

Prov. XVI. 21. the Sweetness of the Lips increaseth Learning.

§. 2. 'Tis a proper Effect of the Ps. LXIII. Believer's Joy. Because thy Loving-kindness

kindness is better than Life, my Lips Serm.II.  
shall praise thee. My Soul shall be ~~~  
satisfy'd with Marrow and Fatness ;  
and my Mouth shall praise thee with  
joyful Lips. 'Tis the early Voice  
of the Convert, The Kings of the Psalm  
Earth shall praise thee, when they CXXXViii.  
hear the words of my mouth ; yea,<sup>4, 5.</sup>  
they shall sing in the ways of the  
Lord. Men will show their plea-  
sure abroad. Such as are govern'd  
by a sensual Tast of things, feel  
a Delight that cannot be pent up.  
They declare themselves in Roar-  
ing and Folly, and an Excess of  
Riot. Now 'tis this Ordinance  
that fixes the distinction between  
profane and sacred Mirth : Be not Eph.V.18,  
drunk with Wine, but be ye fill'd with 19.  
the Spirit, speaking to your selves in  
Psalms. I need but remind you  
of the Example we have newly  
parted with. When Paul and Si-  
lus were in the Stocks, confin'd  
with Scandal and Danger, they  
sung so loud, that the Prisoners  
heard them. This was the Fruit  
of that Redemption they felt in  
themselves, and preach'd to others ;  
and it made good that Promise,

D That

Serm. II. That the Wilderness should be as  
 Eden, and the Desert as the Garden  
 Isa. LI. 3. of the Lord ; Joy and Gladness being  
 found therein, Thanksgiving and the  
 Voice of Melody. This becomes  
 the Triumph we have in God more  
 than Boasting and Wrangling : It's  
 a Duty to the praise of his Grace,  
 who has made us accepted in the Bel-  
 loved. Thus we should begin to  
 enjoy a Mercy. When God was  
 about to open a Spring in the Wil-  
 Numb. derness, Israel sung a Song. Pro-  
 XXI. 17. vidence has testify'd to the Value  
 of a Joy that shows it self this  
 way. When Jephosaphat had ap-  
 2 Chron. pointed Singers to the Lord, who  
 XX. 22. went out before the Army, and they  
 began to sing and praise ; God set  
 Ambushments against the Children of  
 Moab and Ammon, and they were  
 smitten down before Judah.

§. 3. 'Tis a good means of de-  
 claring our Religion to the World.  
 These two are made the same  
 thing, Praising God and Teaching  
 Rom. XV. others ; I will confess to thee among  
 9. the Gentiles, and sing unto thy  
 Name. Nay, Christ himself is  
 brought in as making known his

Doc-

Doctrine by this method : *Saying*, Serm. II.  
*I will declare thy Name unto my Bre-* <sup>Heb. II. 12.</sup>  
*thren ; in the midst of the Congrega-*  
*tion I will sing praise unto thee.*

And well then may it be said of  
his People ; *It is good to sing Prai-* <sup>Psalm</sup>  
*ses unto our God, for it is pleasant,* <sup>CXLVII. 1</sup>  
*and Praise is comely.* Thus we ren-  
der unto him *the Calves of our Lips.* Hos. XIV. 2  
It may be, there's no one Ordi-  
nance in either Publick or Family  
Worship so fitted to this Design.

I could show you from the Lear-  
ned Bishop of *Salisbury's History*,  
how the *Reformation in England*  
prosper'd by the mighty Zeal of  
People in this Work ; and God  
own'd it with the same Blessing in  
*France* : but these things will have  
a more natural place among the  
Exhortations to this Duty. I'll  
therefore leave this Subject to the  
last part of this Design ; and thi-  
ther I refer you.

§. 4. It *promotes* and *sweetens*  
other Ordinances. 'Tis good to  
begin with it ; *to serve the Lord* <sup>Pf. C. 2.</sup>  
*with Gladness, and come before his*  
*presence with Singing.* The Services  
of God's House are so far from

Serm. II. clashing, that they are a mutual  
~~~~ Advantage to one another. Thus  
we find Neh. IX. One fourth part of  
the Day they *read in the Law of*  
*God*, and another fourth was ta-  
ken up in worshipping; and when  
they had *cry'd unto him*, the *Levites*  
*call'd upon 'em*, to *praise his glo-*  
*rious Name*, which is exalted above  
all *Blessing and Praise*. 'Twas thus  
that our Lord concluded his Feast  
of Love with the Disciples; *After*  
*Supper they sung an Hymn*. This  
Variety in publick Worship makes  
it more easy and beautiful. The  
Apostle blames the *Corinthians* for  
the Confusion of their Assemblys,

I Cor.  
XIV. 26.

That every one of 'em had a *Psalm*, a  
*Doctrine*, &c. but he allows the  
Parts themselves. It seems the most  
natural Close of our Devotions.  
When we have been receiving the  
*Good Tidings of Salvation*, and have  
heard it *said unto Sion*, *Thy God*  
*reigneth*; 'tis the very Letter of  
the Prophecy, that with the *Voice*

Ps. CXLIX together we should sing. The Lord  
4, 5, 6. doth therefore take pleasure in his  
People, and beautify the Meek with  
Salvation: That the Saints may be  
joyful

joyful in Glory, and sing aloud upon Serm.II.  
their Beds ; that the high Praises of  
God may be in their mouths.

§. 5. The Heavenly State which every upright Soul is breathing to, comes under this Description. When they that are in their Graves hear the Voice of the Son of Man and live, they'll rise in Tune. Thy dead Men shall live, together with Isa.XXVI. my dead Body shall they arise. Awake<sup>19.</sup> and sing, ye that dwell in the Dust. 'Tis the only Ordinance of this World, that we meet with in a better ; Propheccys shall fail, Tongues <sup>1 Cor.</sup> will cease, and the common means XIII.8. of Knowledg vanish away. But it's the Blessedness of those that dwell Rev.XIV.3 in the Building of God, the House not made with hands, that they shall ever praise him. The 144000 sing a new Song before the Throne. Now surely we should not have had the Joys and Worship of a dear Eternity put into these Names, if there were not something in the present Sweets of Duty to guide our Conception of it. This is the Employment of Saints and Angels, a Meditation upon those Wonders

Serm. II. that are recorded in Heaven, with  
 ~~ everlasting Shouts of Praise to  
 him that sits upon the Throne, and to  
 the Lamb. 'Tis in these terms  
 that God's own Delight is ex-  
 Zeph. III. press'd; *He will rest in his Love,*  
 17. *and rejoice over them with singing.*  
 'Tis a good way to allure our  
 Value for that better Church, when  
 the most delightful part of Wor-  
 ship here is to give it a Title. The  
 Faith and Hope, that are con-  
 tending upwards, do never so  
 well employ themselves, as in the  
 Duty of admiring God; because  
 it's so much the same with the Vi-  
 sion into which they shall expire.

I'll conclude the whole with the  
 Apostle's Advice, grounded on  
 Heb. XIII. this very Argument, *We have here*  
 14, 15. *no continuing City, but we seek one*  
*to come;* 'tis the desire of our Souls  
 that it may be, and we have the  
 Word of a Redeemer that it shall  
 be: *By him therefore let us offer the*  
*Sacrifice of Praise unto God conti-*  
*nually, that is, the Fruit of our Lips,*  
*giving thanks unto his Name.*

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The EXCELLENCE  
of the Duty of  
SINGING.

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SERMON III.

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PSAL. CXLVII. 1.

*Praise ye the Lord, for it is good  
to sing Praise to our God ; for  
it is pleasant, and Praise is  
comely.*

THIS is the third Part of the Subject that has fallen to my share, and which I am to consider at this time ; i. e. To represent the *Excellence* of this noble Duty, and recommend it to your Love and Esteem. I shall D 4 confine

Ser. III. confine my self strictly to this single Branch of the Subject, and endeavour to keep within the limits prescrib'd me.

EXCELLENCE, or the just Commendation that belongs to a thing, may be consider'd either as something *real* and inherent in the Subject; or as something *relative*, and in the respect it bears to other things. The former signifies the *intrinsick Value* of a thing, or what it has in it self to recommend it: The latter signifies its *Preference to other things*, or what there is in it that exceeds others of a like kind.

I shall proceed upon these general Measures in the present Case, and represent the Excellence or *Value* of this Duty, under this double Consideration of it.

I: Consider it more *Absolutely*, and as it is in it self.

II. More *Relatively*, and as it stands in comparison with others.

Under the former I shall shew Ser. III. wherein it agrees, and what it ~~has~~ has more in *common* with others : Under the latter, wherein it excels, and what it has more appropriate and *peculiar* to it self.

I. I shall consider it more *absolutely*. And the Excellence of it will appear, if you view the whole Frame of it, and consider it in all its Parts; *viz.*

§. i. Consider the *Matter* that is to be sung ; in the general, The *Praises of God* : *That I may shew Ps. IX. 14. forth all thy Praise.* And the Apostle expresses it by *Psalms*, and *Hymns*, and *spiritual Songs*; which perhaps may be design'd to signify nothing more than the several Titles and Divisions of the Book of Psalms.

But then this must be understood in the fullest Latitude : Whatsoever tends to the Praise of the Almighty, every Representation of his Glory, and every Discovery of his Will. And if you consult the Sacred Psalmody, you shall find that the Psalms that are

Ser. III. upon record, are full of various  
 Excellencys, and one of the most  
 lofty and noble Parts of the Sacred  
 Writings. Particularly,

We are to sing the Praises of  
*Creating Power.* To this purpose  
 divers of the Psalms of *David* are  
 particularly directed; that recount  
 the Glorys of the great Creator,  
 and celebrate his Praise, in the  
 stately Fabrick of Heaven and  
 Earth, in the rich Furniture and  
 vast Variety of Beings, in all the  
 Impresses of his Glory upon the  
 Creation, and all the Instances of  
 his eternal Power and Godhead.

*Ps. XIX.* The Heavens declare the Glory of  
 1, 2. God, and the Firmament sheweth his  
 Handy-work, &c. Thou art great,  
 clothed with Majesty and Honour;  
 coverest thy self with Light as with a

*Ps. CIV.* Garment; stretchest out the Heavens  
 beginning. as a Curtain: He layeth the Beams of  
 his Chamber in the Water, maketh the  
 Clouds his Chariot, and walketh upon  
 the Wings of the Wind. Thou laid'st  
 the Foundation of the Earth, that it  
 should not be remov'd for ever, and  
 cover'dst it with the Deep as with a  
 Garment, &c.

And

And so in the Frame of our Ser. III. own Nature ; the curious and wonderful Workmanship of Body and Soul, that carry a lively Resemblance, and bear a strong Impression of the Divine Being and Perfection, in every Member and Faculty of each. *Thou hast possess'd my Reins : Thou hast cover'd me in my Mother's Womb.* I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made : Marvellous are thy Works, and that my Soul knoweth right well. My Substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest Parts of the Earth. Thine Eye did see my Substance yet being imperfect, and in thy Book all my Members were written ; which in time were fashion'd, when as yet there was none of them.

Again, We sing the Praises of Redeeming Love. To this several of the noblest Psalms of David expressly refer, that foretel the Coming of the *Messiah*, and describe the Glorys of his Person, and the Fruits of his Death. The Psalmist <sup>Ps. XLV.</sup> sings of the Excellence and Glory of the King ; and particularly describes,

Ser. III. scribes, in lofty Numbers, the  
Kingdom and Priesthood, the Suf-  
~~throughout.~~ fetings and Triumphs of the Re-  
deemer. So the great *Hallel* sung  
by the Jews at the Solemnity of  
the Passover, and is probably  
<sup>Lightf.vol.</sup> thought by Learned Men to be the  
<sup>2. p. 205.</sup> Hymn sung by our Lord at the  
Institution of the Supper. I might  
~~Ps. LI, &c.~~ mention the *Penitential Psalms* that  
describe his Mercy to humble Pe-  
nitents, and abound in Expressions  
of the tenderest Kindness, as well  
as the lowest Abasement.

The Song of *Solomon* is a divine  
and rapturous, as well as a lofty  
and artful Piece of Poetry; descri-  
bing at once the Beauty and Ex-  
cellence of the Redeemer's Person,  
and the Tenderness of his Affection  
and Care; the Intercourses of di-  
vine Love in all the various Wor-  
kings of Kindness and Respect be-  
tween Christ and his Church.

And if you look into the New  
Testament, we have the Song of  
<sup>Luke I. 46.</sup> *Mary* upon the Message of the An-  
gels, and the Salutation of *Eliza-  
beth*: Where she celebrates the  
condescending Favour of the Al-  
mighty

mighty to her low and humble Ser. III.  
State, when he abased the Mighty ~~and~~  
and the Proud ; and his Faithful-  
ness and Mercy to his People Is-  
rael. There is the Song of Za-Luke I.67.  
*charias*; where he recounts at  
large his Faithfulness to his Pro-  
mise in sending the *Messiah*, and  
the mighty Benefits to the World  
by his Appearance : And the rap-  
turous Song of old *Simeon* at the Luke II.24  
sight of the Infant-Redeemer.

Again, We sing the Praises of  
*Providential Care* : His regular  
Government and particular Notice  
of all his Creatures. He daily  
supports the Being, and supplies  
the Wants of innumerable Crea-  
tures, and exercises a wise and  
equal Care of every one. He di-  
rects the Course of publick Af-  
fairs by a sure and unerring Hand,  
and over-rules the Disorders of  
them by seasonable Interposures  
and powerful Influence. Many of  
the Psalms of *David* are dedicated  
to the Praise of his Providence.  
He describes his Omnipresence and  
particular Observance of every  
thing : *Whither shall I flee from* [Psalms  
CXXXIX  
thy 7, 8, 9.

Ser. III. thy Presence? Whither shall I go  
from thy Spirit? If I ascend up into Heaven; if I make my bed in Hell; if I take the Wings of the Morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the Earth; behold thou art there, &c. He describes his general Goodness and his tender Mercy over all his

Psalm Works: *The Earth is full of the Goodness of the Lord.* The Eyes of  
**CXLVIII.** 15, 16. all look unto thee, and thou givest them their Food in due season. He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the Desires of all the Living. He celebrates his own Deliverance out of  
**Ps. XVIII.** the hands of all his Enemys, and out of the hands of Saul.

Particularly, The extraordinary Appearances of God in the World, both of Judgment and Mercy; in the unusual Displays of himself, as well as in the more stated and ordinary Course of things. This has been always Matter of Praise to the People of God, and the Subject of some of their noblest Songs. Such was the Song of Moses; Exod. XV. where he magnifies the *Arm of the Lord* in so miraculous Appearance, that at once carry'd with it sudden Deli-

Deliverance to his People, surprising Ruin to their Enemys, and Terroure and Amazement to all the World. Such was his dying Song ; where he gives a lively and affecting Description of the distinguishing Favour and rich<sup>1</sup> — 46. Bounty of God to *Israel*, and all the Terrors of Vengeance and Wrath that would come upon them for their Rebellion and Abuse. And so the Song of *Deborah* and *Barak*, who judg'd *Israel* when God subdu'd the *Canaanites* before them, is full of beautiful Figures and noble Flights ; and is remarkable as well for its artful Contrivance, as its admirable Sense.

I shall close this Head with this one Reflection : That as the Sacred Poesy is one of the noblest Parts of all the Divine Writings, so it vastly exceeds, in the Sublimeness of Subject and Majesty of Expression, the finest Compositions of human Wit, and the most labour'd Productions of Art. And 'tis greatly to be lamented, that that noble Art, which sprung from God, and was devoted to his Praise,

Ser. III. Praise, is so sadly degenerated  
from its original Design and proper Use. The celebrated Poets of  
the present Age have debas'd the  
Majesty of Verse, and prostituted  
the Muses to the Service of their  
Lusts ; and so the loftiest Numbers  
and the sweetest Verse have  
been employ'd in describing the  
fanciful Atchievements and the  
fulsom Praise of some little *Hero*  
or leud *Amour*. The impure Mix-  
tures of the finest Poems offend  
and shock a pious or a virtuous  
Mind, and render them full of  
Snare and Danger to others : like  
luscious *Poison*, that pleases and  
corrupts, easily insinuates and en-  
ters deep ; and the higher a relish  
it gives, the more surely destroys.

§. 2. Let us consider the *Subject*  
that is to be employ'd in singing  
the Praises of God. 'Tis the Ex-  
ercise of the whole Man. It em-  
ploys the Faculty's and Members  
of Soul and Body. It engages the  
full Strength of Nature. For in-  
stance,

There must be a Union and Har-  
mony of all the *Powers* of the Soul.

They

They must all concur, and be set Ser. III.  
right to sing the Praises of God. ~~~~~  
*I will praise thee, O Lord, with my Ps. IX. 1.*  
*whole Heart! Bless the Lord, O my Ps. CIII. 1.*  
Soul, and all that is within me bless  
his holy Name. The Heart is the  
Seat of Life and the Spring of  
Motion, that diffuses Life into  
every Part, and feeds the vital  
Pulse in every Vein. The Heart is  
the Life and Soul of every Duty,  
and we are expressly requir'd to  
make Melody in our Heart. The Eph. V. 19.  
Understanding is the noble and dis- Ps. XLVII.  
tinguishing Power of the Soul; and 7.  
we must sing Praises with Under- 1 Cor.  
standing: I will sing with the Spirit, XIV. 15.  
and with Understanding. Which,  
tho' it should be meant of the Un-  
derstanding of others, i. e. that  
they may understand what is sung  
(as may be gather'd from v. 19.)  
yet does however clearly suppose,  
and more strongly infer his own.  
We must distinctly apprehend, and  
rightly conceive the Sense and  
Meaning of what we sing. It re-  
quires the proper Exercise of all  
the Affections, the suitable working  
of the natural Passions answerable  
to

Ser. III. to the various Matter and the  
 ~~~~~ different Subject of our Song.

Yea, Singing requires the Exercise of all the *Graces*, and the most heavenly and exalted Frame of Mind. 'Tis no low and common Temper of 'Soul, that is suitable to the high Praises of God.

**Col. III. 16** We must sing with *Grace in our Hearts*.

For instance, with an humble *Reverence* and holy Awe, under the sense of his infinite Distance and glorious Excellence,

**Exod. XV.** who is fearful in Praises, working Wonders.

With Divine *Love*: An affectionate Sense of his Loveliness and Perfection; a Heart enflam'd with Love to God, as the most amiable Being and Fountain of all Perfection, and strongly aspiring and tending towards him. With heavenly *Joy*: An Exultation of Heart; the Risings and Overflowings of the Soul, from the Fulness of inward Sense, and Strength of inward Resentment. We must be

**Pf. IX. 2.** glad and rejoice; and make a joyful

**-XCV. 4.** noise, rejoice and sing Praise. With real *Gratitude*: A kindly Resentment of divine Favours; a Heart deeply

deeply affected with his various Ser. III: Goodness, and freely dispos'd to ~~the~~ proper Acknowledgments and Returns, &c.

And then the *Members* of the Body must be employ'd too ; and it engages all the noble and excellent Parts. The *Tongue* that is our *Glory* is the great Instrument of Praise, and constantly employ'd in singing to the Lord : *My Glory* Ps. XXX. shall sing Praise to thee, and not be<sup>12.</sup> silent. The *Lips*; Because thy Loving-kindness is better than Life, my Lips shall praise thee. The Mouth; My Mouth shall praise ——<sup>5.</sup> thee with joyful Lips. Then was our Mouth fill'd with Laughter and Psalm our Tongue with Songs. Our Breath CXXVI.2. and Voice must be employ'd ; we must sing with the Voice of a Psalm, XCVIII.5. and with the Voice of Joy and —XLII.4. Praise. And, Let every thing that —CL. ult. hath Breath praise the Lord.

Not to mention, that under the Law they prais'd God with Dancing and clapping their hands ; shouting for Joy, and playing upon the Viol and Harp, and all the Instruments of Musick.

Ser. III. §. 3. Consider the *Exercise* it self. 'Tis a noble Exercise suitable to the glorious Object it's employ'd about, and the excellent Subject it employs. There are several Propertys of singular Excellence. For instance;

• Serm. II. 'Tis a great *Solemnity* of Gospel-Worship. That it was practis'd under the Law, appears by the whole Book of Psalms; and is not, I suppose, call'd in question by any: That 'tis renew'd and continu'd under the Gospel, has been already prov'd. I am only to argue from thence.

'Tis not, I think, a merely natural Duty, much less an arbitrary one, that can be justly reckon'd among the Inventions of Men, or to draw its Original from the Wisdom of this World. 'Tis an Institution of Gospel-Worship, that bears the Impress of divine

Col.III.16 Authority, is consecrated by the Mat.XXVI Example of the Redeemer, and to 30. be perform'd by the help of the

Eph.V.18. Divine Spirit: Be fill'd with the Spirit, speaking to your selves in 1Cor.XIV Psalms, &c. And, I will sing with 15. the

*the Spirit and with Understanding:* Ser. III.  
i. e. by the Assistance of the Spi- *~*  
rit of God, as well as with the  
Exercise of my own.

It has been the constant Practice  
of the Church of God in every  
Age, and is a standing Part of our  
solemn Worship. And indeed it  
gives a *Solemnity* to Divine Wor-  
ship, and adds a certain *State* to  
every other part. It carries a  
Sweetness and a Majesty in it,  
gives an Air and Delight to it,  
and is one of the principal *Glorys*  
of the Gospel Worship.

Besides, 'tis a *spiritual* Service.  
Spirituality is the distinguishing  
Character of every Part of Gospel  
Worship; as we are to have a  
more direct eye to God who is a  
Spirit, and more especially to re-  
gard the Workings and Exercise  
of our own Spirit: *To worship him* Joh. IV. 24  
*in Spirit and in Truth.*

Now tho' the Ceremony and  
State of the legal Worship, and  
especially of the Temple-Service,  
requir'd many musical Instruments  
and great external Pomp; yet  
singing the Praises of God is very  
suitable

Ser. III. suitable to the Purity of Gospel-Worship, and a very great Exercise of Spirituality. 'Tis a spiritual Object we are wholly to attend; The Glory and Perfection of the Divine Being. We eye him and terminate on him in the most direct and immediate manner. And 'tis the proper Exercise of our own Spirit: *I will sing with the Spirit and with Understanding.* And tho there is a Concurrence of Soul and Body, and the one is employ'd as well as the other; yet the Soul is the proper Agent, the Body only the Instrument of the Soul, or the *Organ* thro which it sings the Praises of God.

Indeed it requires the best Exercise of the Soul, as 'tis proper to pure unbody'd Spirits: That we be *fill'd with the Spirit, speaking to our selves in Psalms, &c.* The Mind should be wholly abstracted from all sensible Objects, and deeply intent in the Contemplation of the Divine Glory; and 'tis never more spiritual, than in the right Performance of this heavenly Work.

Further;

Further; 'Tis a *comely* Exercise. Ser. III.  
'Tis good to sing Praise to our God,<sup>Psalm</sup>  
and Praise is *comely*. Comeliness<sup>CXLVII.</sup>  
or *Decency* is the Sutableness of  
things one to another, and a cer-  
tain Agreeableness between them;  
when there is a due Proportion,  
or at least a proper Sutableness  
between Persons or Things, as it  
may be respectively apply'd: as in  
a comely Face or regular Building.

Now there is a mighty Decency  
in this Case, and it well becomes  
us to sing the Praises of God.  
Nothing we can do is more worthy  
of God, or better agrees to our  
selves. Nothing is more suitable to  
the Distance and Relation between  
God and his Creatures. When the  
heavenly King is surrounded with  
loud Acclamations of joyful Sub-  
jects, his Excellence and Perfection  
proclaim'd and exalted by the  
highest Praise; his wonderful  
Works are magnify'd and admir'd  
in triumphant Acknowledgments,  
and his Bounty and Love celebra-  
ted and ador'd with Hallelujahs of  
Joy: When every Mouth is fill'd  
with his Praise, and every Place

re-

Ser. III. resounds and echoes back his  
 Name; nothing is more agreeable  
 in it self, or has a more delightful  
 lovely Appearance to the World.

Finally, 'Tis highly *acceptable*  
 and pleasing to God. 'Tis an Ho-  
 nour to the Almighty (such as a  
 Creature is capable of) to sing his  
 Praise: And God is pleas'd with  
 the Service, both as his own Ap-  
 pointment, and the highest Ex-  
 pression of our Esteem. He is  
 the proper Object and the glorious  
 Theme, and has sometimes given  
 signal Marks of his Approbation.

Eph. V. 19. 'Tis making *Melody in our Hearts to*  
*the Lord.* 'Tis Melody to the

LO RD: 'Tis grateful in the Ears  
 of the Almighty, as Melody and  
 Musick is in ours. He *delights* in the

Ps. XXII. 3 Praises of his Saints, as he *inhabits*  
 the Praises of *Israel.* The Voice  
 of their sincere Praise is a plea-  
 sant Sound: The Breath of their  
 Praise, like the *Smoke* of the Sa-  
 crifice, or the *Cloud* of Incense,  
 ascends to God in a sweet Per-  
 fume. 'Tis an *Odour* of a sweet  
 smell, and with such Sacrifices God is  
 well *pleas'd.*

§. 4. Consider the *Ends* and *Uses* Ser. III.  
of it. 'Tis not a mere Solemnity; a Piece of empty State; only to give Life and Airs to the more grave and solemn Parts of Worship, or a more sensible Relish of Pleasure to the Service of God. 'Tis a profitable Exercise, and is of admirable Benefit and Use. For instance,

'Tis very *Instructing*. There is a rich Variety of excellent Matter in the Sacred Psalms, suitable to all the Conditions of Life, and all the Workings of an holy Soul: Many rare Discoverys of divine Truth, and many rich Experiences. The Title of divers Psalms is *Maschil*, i.e. A Psalm giving Instruction.

- Now singing Praises is very profitable for the improving of our Understanding and Knowledg of the Truth. Many a Beam of Divine Light darts into the Mind, and shines clear and strong. The Experiences of other holy Souls instruct us in the Knowledg of our own. And so of all the ways of Improvement by the Divine Word, as Reading, Hearing, &c.

E this

Ser. III. this is none of the least considerable, both as to the clearer Knowldg of the Divine Wll, and the better Acquaintance with our selves. Speaking to your selves in Psalms, &c. communing with one another about them: And, Teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and Hymns: Where Teaching may refer to Matters of Faith and Doctrine, and Admonishing to Rules of Life and Duty. And so we may considerably grow in the Knowldg of the Truth, and abound with practical Directions for the Government of Life. And whatsoever is the Subject of the Psalm we sing, may be profitably improv'd by wise Accommodation to our selves, or at least by proper Meditations upon it.

Again, 'Tis an *Affecting Exercise*, peculiarly fitted with special Advantage to raise holy Affections of Soul, and enliven every Grace. The Thoughts have more leisure to work, and are more intensely fix'd, while the Sound is dilated and drawn out to so great a length; and the Mind employ'd with so much

much Solemnity. And the same Ser. III. thing will more powerfully move, and more sensibly affect, when 'tis devoutly sung, than when 'tis ever so carefully read. Thus Singing will affect the Soul with an inward Grief and the deepest Sorrow in Penitential Psalms, and with the warmest Love and Joy in Psalms of Praise. It will raise and dilate the Mind, and give the best advantage to the strongest Workings of Affection. Thus the Hearts of holy Men have been sometimes quicken'd and drawn forth in Raptures of Love and Extasys of Delight. They have been, as it were, fluttering upon the Wing, and ready to rise, and mount, and fly away. St. Austin relates of himself at his first Conversion ; *O how much have I wept, confess. how exceedingly moved and affected, lib. 9. c. 6. at the Hymns and Songs and harmonious Voices of the Church ! Those Voices pierc'd my Ears ; thy Truth enter'd my Soul, devout Affections were rais'd, Tears flow'd, &c.* To this purpose the Testimony and Experience of the famous Beza is very

Ser. III. remarkable, That when he came  
 Beza in Psal. XCI. into the Assembly, while they  
 were singing the Praises of God, he found himself suddenly inspir'd  
 with a divine Warmth, and strangely affected with Love and  
 Joy; so that the Assembly seem'd to him as the Gate of Heaven, or  
 an Entrance into Glory.

Again; 'tis an Entertaining and  
 Psal. pleasant Work: '*Tis good to sing*  
 CXLVII. i *Praise, for it is pleasant.* 'Tis a  
 religious Entertainment, a divine  
 Repast to an holy Soul, by which  
 it gives vent to its inward Resent-  
 ments, and takes in an agreeable  
 Pleasure. 'Tis a sweet Solace and  
 Delight in Circumstances of Pro-  
 perity and Ease, to sing the Prai-  
 ses of God; and 'tis most peculi-  
 arly suitable and proper at such a  
 Jam. v. 13. time: *If any be merry, let him sing*  
 Eccl. VII. *Psalms. In the time of Prosperity*  
 14. *rejoice.*

This will take off the Mind  
 from low Delights and carnal  
 Mirth, that are apt to divert and  
 defile; and take it up in the most  
 proper Exercise, and be at the  
 same time a noble Employment

\*

and

and Entertainment too. 'Twill Set. III.  
enliven our Spirits, and refine our Joys; 'twill yield a Refreshment to the Mind, tir'd with other holy Exercises, and amidst all the other Delights of Life be constant Melody and Musick to the Soul: They Act. II. 47.  
*continu'd daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking Bread from House to House, did eat their Meat with Gladness and Singleness of Heart, praising the Lord.* And 'tis said of the Disciples, at the Ascension of our Lord, *They worship'd him, and return'd to Jerusalem with great Joy,* Luke XXIV. 53.  
*and were continually in the Temple blessing and praising God.*

Lastly, 'Tis very comforting and supporting: 'Tis the great Refreshment of an afflicted State, as well as the Entertainment of a more prosperous one: 'Tis a mighty Relief to a Spirit oppress'd with Cares and Griefs; it exhilarates and revives a drooping and languishing Soul, and raises and enlarges the Heart when 'tis sunk down and contracted within it self, and has sometimes yielded Consolation and Support under

Ser. III. the closest Confinement and the severest Sufferings. Thus *Paul* and  
Act. XVI. *Silas* in a close Prison, fastned in  
25. the Stocks, in the Darkness of the Night, reliev'd their Spirits, and delighted their Souls by singing the Praises of God. And the ho-

ly Psalmist tells us his Experience,

Ps. CXIX. *Thy Statutes have been my Songs in the House of my Pilgrimage.* They have furnish'd me with matter of Praise in my Wilderness State, and in my Wandrings thro this World, and have refresh'd my Soul in all the wearisom Stages and Fatigues of Life.

To this purpose the primitive Christians, under the third Persecution by *Trajan*, met together very early on a stated day, to sing an *Hymn to Christ their God*, as is related by *Pliny*, an Heathen Writer, in his Account to the Emperor. And that Passage of the renown'd and heroick *Luther* is worthy Observation, who was wont to tell *Melancthon* (a very wise and learned, but a more timorous and fearful Man) under the great Discouragements and dark Prospects of

of things at the beginning of the Ser. III.  
Reformation : *Come, says he, let us sing the 46th Psalm, and let Earth  
and Hell do its worst.*

I shall only further observe, with relation to each of these Advantages of Singing, that they extend to others as well as to our selves. We are to speak to our selves, or to one another, in *Psalms*; and to teach and admonish one another, *εαυτούς*, the same word as before. 'Tis mutually beneficial, and of extensive Use. All concur together in this holy Exercise, and each one excites and assists the other. Every other Person, that sings the Praises of God, helps to excite the Affection, and raise the Devotion of my Soul; and my Singing helps to raise and excite another's. The Breath of Praise mutually fans one another's Souls, kindles a divine Heat, and blows it up into a Flame; and so every one contributes something to another's Good, and receives some help from every other.

II. I shall consider it more relatively, and in comparison with other Dutys. This will not be any odious Comparison or invidious Preference, like those among Men, to sink the Character and darken the Reputation of one, to raise and brighten another. 'Tis usual, in the Scriptures, to make Comparisons of Graces and Dutys as well as Sins, and to give the Preference of one to another; and 'tis a proper measure, by which to take the value of things, to compare them with others of the same kind, and shew wherein they excel. Thus our Lord speaks of the

Mat.XXII. First and Great Command, that  
38. which is chief and principal in

Value as well as in Order; and so

Mat.V.19. we read of the Least Command.

And the Apostle makes a comparison among the principal Graces, and gives the just Preference of

1 Cor. one to the rest: Now remaineth  
XIII. 13. Faith, Hope, Charity, these three,

but the greatest of these is Charity;  
i. e. it excels the other two. And

1 Cor.XII. he speaks of coveting the best Gifts,  
31. and

and of shewing a more excellent way. Ser. III.  
There is a real Difference in the three Degrees of their Excellence, as there is in their Natures and Kinds.

But then this must be understood to be in some *certain* Respects only, not in *every* Respect: for every Grace and Duty has its proper Excellence as well as its proper Place, and so every one exceeds another in some certain Respects and to some special Purposes; so that this is design'd only to give the true value, and assign the proper place of one, not to prejudice or disparage any.

To bring this down to the present Case: There are other Dutys of Religion that, for instance, are more absolutely necessary in our present State, and all things consider'd, than singing the Praises of God; such as Repentance towards God, and Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ: These are indispensably necessary by the Gospel-Covenant, and such as we can't be sav'd without; and in this Respect they exceed all others. But then this Duty is preferable in *some* Respects,

Ser. III. spects, and has Characters of Excellence peculiar to it self. As now, for instance, to represent this matter a little distinctly.

§. 1. In the respect it bears to its Object, it has a direct respect to God, and so has every other part of Worship; but it respects him under a higher Consideration, and in nobler Instances. He is to be consider'd as the proper Object of Praise; *i. e.* with respect to the most glorious Perfections of his Nature, and the most excellent Displays of himself: other Dutys and Graces respect him in lower Instances, and in a more confin'd Sense. So Prayer respects his All-sufficiency, that he can supply all my Wants; Repentance, his Mercy, that he is inclin'd to forgive; Faith, his Power and Word, that he is able and dispos'd to deliver and save, &c.

But Praise respects God, as he is in himself, in all the shining Perfections of his Nature, and in all his wonderful Works; in every Appearance of Love and Power, of Mercy and Judgment to the World.

World. We consider him as the Ser. III: most glorious and lovely Being, the most adorable Object, and worthy the highest Veneration. In a word, 'tis God in his highest Glory, and under the best Considerations of him, that is the proper Object of Praise.

Thus you shall find he is always spoken of in the present Case: *We Ps. LXVI. sing forth the Honour of his Name;*<sup>2.</sup> i. e. the Perfections of his Nature by which he makes himself known, and is distinguish'd from every other Being. We sing Praise to him according to his excellent Great-<sup>Psf. CL. 2.</sup> ness. *Sing Praises to our King,* sing Ps. XLVII. *Praises,* for God is the King of all.<sup>67.</sup> the Earth. *Sing to God,* sing Praise, Psal. extol him that rideth upon the Hea-<sup>LXVIII. 4.</sup> vens by his name Jah, and rejoice before him. And so of his great Ap-  
pearances in the World: We sing of all his marvellous Works; and Psal. IX. 1. praise him according to his mighty Ps. CL. 2. Acts. We shew forth his Salvation, Ps. XCVI. declare his Glory among the Hea-<sup>1, 2.</sup> thens, his Wonders among the Peo- ple: He is great, and greatly to be fear'd, above all Gods.

Ser. III. §. 2. With respect to the proper  
Subjects, who are fit and qualify'd  
to perform it. I don't deny but  
a wicked Man may sing the Prai-  
ses of God, and may receive In-  
struction and Admonition by what  
he sings; so all Men are call'd up-  
on to sing to God their *Maker*.

Psal. C. But 'tis the more proper Duty of  
the *Upright*, and such only can  
reach the full or the principal Ends  
of it: *Rejoice in the Lord, ye Righ-  
teous, for Praise is comely for the Up-  
right.*

There are some Dutys of Reli-  
gion that are more proper to wic-  
ked Men, and especially design'd  
for their good, such as the worst  
of Men ought to perform, and  
may hope to find Benefit by: as  
Prayer, for pardoning Mercy and  
renewing Grace; hearing the  
Word, for the Conviction of Con-  
science, and Instruction in the  
Truth; Repentance for Sin, &c.  
But now singing the Praises of the  
Lord, in its most direct and natural  
Signification and Use, supposes  
Conversion, and is the more pro-  
per Exercise of a regenerate Soul.

They

They are only fit to sing the Prai-Ser. III.  
ses of God, whose Souls are set ~~up~~  
right, and can make melody in  
their Hearts to the Lord ; where-  
as the Praises of wicked Men, in  
the most artful Tunes, and with  
the sweetest Voice, is but jar-  
ring Discord, and a grating Noise  
in the Ears of God ; like a fine  
*Lesson* play'd upon an Instrument  
unstrung and out of Tune.

Besides, that 'tis the proper Du-  
ty of the best *Circumstances*, and  
the best *Frames* of Mind. Every  
Duty has its special season, and is  
more suitable and proper at one  
time than another : So we *humble*  
~~fl~~ our selves under the mighty hand  
~~b~~ of God ; we *cry* to the Lord in  
Distress, &c. but now we are es-  
pecially to *sing* the Praises of God  
in the most flourishing and pro-  
perous Condition of Life, and the  
most exalted Frame of Mind : *If Jam. v. 13.*  
*any be merry, let him sing Psalms.*  
*In the time of Prosperity rejoice.* *Eccl. VII.*  
'Tis then peculiarly suitable when a  
Man flows with Abundance, and  
lives at Ease ; when he has the  
highest Relishes of the Divine Fa-  
vour,

Ser. III. your, and his Heart is warm'd  
with Divine Love, and full of sweet  
Experience.

§. 3. With respect to the *Kind* of the Exercise it self. The Divine Authority enstamps a value upon every Duty, and challenges a distinct regard; but singing the Praises of God is the noblest part of Worship, as 'tis the most *unselfish* and disinterested Exercise of the Soul: It has not only the directest respect to God, and that in the highest and most excellent Consideration of him; but it entirely respects him, and is wholly taken up in the Contemplation and Regard of him. 'Tis an Expression of pure Gratitude and Love, the most *generous* Service we perform to God, and carrys in it the liveliest Signatures of a Divine and *God-like* Temper of Mind.

In other Dutys there is a Mixture of *Self* and Interest: Some Necessity urges, some Advantage is propos'd by it. We expect something *from* God in other Services of Worship, in this we offer something *to* him. We make a  
Tender

Tender of our Praise, and seek Ser. III.  
only his Acceptance : In other ~~things~~  
things we propose our own good,  
in this the Glory of God ; and of  
every other Duty this has the most  
*intire* regard to him.

In a word ; to offer Praise to  
God is the most divine and per-  
fect Action of the Soul, and most  
eminently *glorifies* him. Ps. L. ult.

§. 4. With respect to the *Place*  
where 'tis perform'd. Heaven is  
a Region of Purity and Glory,  
the Seat of Perfection and Ble-  
ssedness : In that State much of our  
present Work will wholly cease,  
and all will receive a considerable  
Change. There are many of the  
Dutys of Religion, and of the  
first Rank and Order, that seem  
calculated to our present State,  
and have no other use but in this  
World. Whatsoever supposes our  
Apostacy from God, or respects  
our Imperfection and Guilt, will  
cease to be our Duty, when we  
come to Heaven and are perfectly  
recover'd ; whatsoever had a Ten-  
dency to our Recovery, and is not  
comprehended under the Duty of  
Praise.

Ser. III. Praise: We shall rest from the Labour of present Service, and be deliver'd from every Weakness and Defect. Thus *Prayer* will cease when every Want will be perfectly supply'd, and every Desire fully satisfy'd. We shall not need to attend upon *Gospel-Ordinances*, the Instruments and Vehicles of the Divine Presence and Grace in the present distant and imperfect State, where we know *in part*, and see thro a Glass darkly; for we shall then see him as he is, and that which is perfect will be come. Repentance will cease, and all Tears be wip'd away; for there will be no more Sin nor Sorrow for ever. *Faith* will vanish at the Presence of its Object, and we shall walk by Sight, and not by *Faith*. *Hope* will be swallow'd up

Rom. VIII. in Fruition: for *Hope* that is seen is not *Hope*; for what a Man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it? There will be a mighty Alteration in the whole Frame of our present Duty.

But now Singing the Praises of God is the Work of Heaven: 'Twill remove with us out of this World,

World, and find Admittance in Ser. III. Glory : Yea Heaven is the proper Seat of Praise, as 'tis of Perfection. The more perfect knowledg. of the Glory of God, and fuller Enjoyment of his Love, that render other Means and Dutys needless, and determine their Use, raise this to a higher Perfection, and give it the greater Advantage. The clearer Views of Divine Glory, and the livelier sense of Divine Love, will make our Praise the more in season as well as the more compleat. 'Twill enlarge the Subject of our Song, and raise and exalt our Minds ; and we shall see greater reason, as well as be better capable of singing Hymns of Praise. So that 'tis not only very agreeable to the Heavenly State, but most proper to it : and perhaps we can form no truer Conception of the Work of Heaven than this.

For this reason very probably the Apostle prefers *Love* to *Faith* 1 Cor. and *Hope*, as it has a nearer Alliance and Relation to the future World, and is not limited and confin'd

Ser. III. confin'd to this. 'Tis most proper  
 ~~~~~ to the Heavenly State, and will  
 rise to its highest Perfection and  
 Glory, when Faith and Hope (at  
 least in their present Measures and  
 Kinds) will cease of themselves,  
 and be wholly laid aside. Here-  
 upon,

§. 5. With respect to the *Part-ners* and Companions of our Praise,  
 our Associates in this blessed Work.  
 Praise is sometimes spoken of as  
 the Duty of universal Nature, and  
 every Creature is call'd upon to  
 perform it ; the *Heavens* and  
 Ps. LXIX. *Earth*, the *Sun*, and *Moon*, and  
 3, 4. *Stars*, the *Dragons* and *Deep*, *Fire*  
 Psal. and *Hail*, *Mountains* and *Hills*,  
 CXLVIII. *Beasts* and *Cattel*.

But 'tis the proper Work of the  
*Angels* of God, the first Rank of  
 created Beings, and of the no-  
 blest Powers of Nature ; the At-  
 tendants on his Throne, and Fa-  
 vorites of his Court, that per-  
 fectly do his Will, and are the  
 Job Patterns of our Obedience. The  
 XXXVIII Morning-Stars sung together, and all  
 7. the Sons of God shouted for Joy :  
     i. e. the Angels of God, the eldest  
                 Offspring

Offspring of his Power, and the Ser. III.  
brightest Images of his Glory. So ~~the~~ the multitude of the heavenly Host  
brought the welcome Tidings of a  
Redeemer to the World, in an  
Hymn of Praise: They sung Praise Luk. II. 13.  
to God, saying, Glory to God in the  
Highest, &c. and indeed that was  
the greatest occasion, and the no-  
blest Theme for an Angel's Song.

Yea, this is represented as the  
constant Employment of all the  
Blessed above. - The four \* Beasts <sup>Z̄wā, liv-</sup>  
had six Wings, and full of Eyes <sup>ing things.</sup> Rev. IV. 8.  
within, and rest not Day and Night,  
saying, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord  
God Almighty, which was, and is,  
and is to come. The twenty four El-  
ders fell down before him that sitteth  
upon the Throne, and worship him  
that liveth for ever and ever, and  
cast their Crowns before the Throne,  
saying, Thou'rt worthy to receive  
Glory, Honour, Power, for thou hast  
made all things, &c. The glori-  
fy'd Saints, and Spirits of the per-  
fected Just, that are refin'd from  
all Allays of Flesh, and advanc'd  
to the brightest Glory, they join  
in with the sacred Quire, and bear  
their

Ser. III. their part in the Anthems of the  
Blessed: They strike up their Voices, and mingle Praises with the Seraphim above. The Praises and Triumphs of God, and of the Redeemer, are handed about from Throne to Throne; and the whole heavenly Region rings aloud with

Rev. XV. Acclamations of Joy. They sung  
13. the Song of Moses, the Servant of  
the Lord, and the Song of the Lamb,  
saying, Great and marvellous are thy  
Works, Lord God Almighty; just  
and true are thy Ways, thou King of  
Saints. 'Tis the Voice of all the

Rev. XIX. Heavenly Host: I heard a great  
12. Voice of much People in Heaven, saying,  
Hallelujah, Salvation, and Glory,  
and Honour, and Power unto  
the Lord our God; for true and  
righteous are his Judgments, for he  
hath judg'd the great Whore, &c.  
And tho' these Expressions should  
be thought to have a more direct  
and immediate Reference to the  
glorious and triumphant State of  
the Church in this World, and to  
be a prophetick Description of its  
best and happiest Circumstance on  
Earth; it will equally serve the  
present

present purpose, and I suppose Ser. III. ought not to exclude a final and ultimate Reference to its perfect and glorify'd State above.

Particularly, the Sight of the Lamb of God in the midst of the Throne, with the Marks of his Sufferings and Glory about him, will be ravishing and transporting to a glorify'd Soul: 'Twill inspire his Heart with Flames of divine Love, and fill his Soul with Extasys of heavenly Joy: 'Twill furnish out the noblest Song of Praise, and give the greatest Enlivening and Elevation of Thought. Hence they are represented in their highest Glory, array'd with Light, bearing Palms of Victory in their Hands, and Crowns of Glory upon their Heads, while they sing his Glory, and celebrate his Praise: *They sung a new Song,* Rev. V. 9.  
*saying, Thou art worthy to take the Book, and open the Seals, for thou wast slain and hast redeem'd us unto God by thy Blood, out of every Kin-dred and Tongue, and People and Nation, and made us to our God Kings and Priests. And, Worthy is the*

Ser. III. the Lamb that was slain, to receive  
 Power and Riches, and Wisdom, and  
 Rev. V. II. Strength, and Honour, and Glory and  
 Rev. VII. Blessing. So we read of a great  
 9, 10, 11. Multitude, which no Man could num-  
 ber, stood before the Throne and be-  
 fore the Lamb, cloth'd with white  
 Robes and Palms in their Hands,  
 that cry'd with a loud Voice, Salva-  
 tion, &c. and all the Angels stood  
 round about the Throne, and the El-  
 ders, and the four Beasts.

In short, 'tis the proper Im-  
 plement of the best of Creatures,  
 of the whole Society of the Blef-  
 sed, the general Assembly and  
 Heb. XII. Church of the Firstborn.  
 And methinks there is not a more lively  
 23. ταῦται. Emblem, or affecting Representation  
 γεγίσ. of Heaven on Earth, than an  
 Assembly of worshipping Chris-  
 tians, singing the Praises of God.  
 This is just as they do in Heaven;  
 so are the Angels employ'd above;  
 not in Prayer to God, and mourn-  
 ing for Sin, but in Exercises of  
 Love, and Songs of Praise: So  
 the Poet,

— — — — — *For all we know  
Of what the Blessed do Above,  
Is that they Sing, and that they  
Love.*

§. 6. With respect to its Duration and Continuance. Other Dutys cease, as the Reason of them ceases; but singing Praise will last for ever, and be the Work of a whole Eternity. 'Tis the perpetual Exercise of the Blessed, as the Reason and Ground of it is perpetual; and after the Revolution of numberless Ages, will never decay or grow out of Date. There will be constant and growing occasion of Praise to all Eternity. The Subject of their Song will never be exhausted, and never fail; but the clearer and fuller Displays of Divine Perfection will open new Scenes of Glory, and furnish fresh variety of Matter for eternal Praise.

And their Souls will never be unstrung and out of tune; there will be nothing to disturb their Joys, or interrupt the Harmony  
of

Ser.. III. of their Praise. They shall never  
~~~~~ hang their Harps upon the Wil-  
lows, or sit disconsolate more:  
They will wind up the Strings of  
their sacred Lyre, and raise their  
Notes to the highest Pitch of Praise:  
They will sing the *Songs of Sion*,  
and the *new Song*, with fresh Vigour  
of Mind, and with perpetual  
**Pf. CIV.** Youth: *I will sing unto the Lord as  
33. long as I live, I will sing Praise to  
my God while I have any Being.*

I shall close the whole with two  
*practical* Reflections, that will fit-  
ly respect the two parts of this  
Discourse.

1. How infinitely excellent must  
*God* be that is the Object of all  
our Praise, to whom all our Praise  
is directed, and who is the sub-  
ject Matter of them all! Every  
Psalm of Praise is an Hymn to  
God, and Display of some or o-  
ther of his Perfections. The Di-  
vine Glory gives the truest Beau-  
ty, and the brightest Lustre to e-  
very Song of Praiſe. A naked  
Relation of Divine Perfection,  
without the Aids of Eloquence  
and

and Art, will make a more illus-  
trious Description than the finest  
Allusions, and the most exquisite  
Fictions of human Fancy and Wit.  
It receives a Nobleness and Dign-  
ity from its Subject ; and abstract  
it from God, and it presently lo-  
ses its Perfection and Glory.

Yea, the Divine Glory rises a-  
bove the loftiest Praise ; and we  
fall vastly short of his just Praise  
when we soar highest in our Ac-  
knowledgments, and are most en-  
larg'd. The Heathen Poets a-  
dorn'd the Praises of their Deitys  
and Heroes with all the Figures of  
Speech, and Fiction of the Mind,  
and sometimes with the borrow'd  
Glorys of the true God ; but the  
divine Being far exceeds in great  
*Reality* the highest Flights and  
holdest Figures of even *Poetick*  
Licence and Rage. There are vast  
Reaches of unknown Perfection be-  
yond the Discovery of an Eye of  
Sense, or Comprehension of a fi-  
nite Mind, above all the Songs and  
Triumphs of Angels and Men.

And how infinitely excellent a  
Being must he needs be, who is the

Ser. III. Subject of our Songs, and the  
 Glory of them too; who furnishes Matter of perpetual Praise to all the Saints below, and all the Blessed above, to the *Hallelujahs* of Heaven, and *Hosannahs* of Earth; whose Perfection inspires the Matter of our Song, and the devoutest Affections of Soul; that gives the greatest Glory to every one, and far exceeds them all? Contemplate the Divine Being as the Object of our Praise; adore the Divine Glory that is so illustriously great, that reaches wider than the Earth, rises higher than the Heavens, and shines with a surpassing and perpetual Brightness.

2. With what *Frames* of Soul should we perform this excellent Duty! If the Duty it self be so noble and high, the Frame of our Spirits should not be low and mean: If in so many respects it exceed other Dutys of Religion, how spiritual and rais'd should be the Temper of our Minds?

Keep a Guard upon the *Senses* as well as the Thoughts in singing

\*

the

the Praises of God, that the Heart Ser. III.  
ben't diverted by sensible Pleasure,   
or too close Attendance to the  
Rules of Art, the Harmony and  
Proportion of Numbers, or the  
Melody and Sweetness of Sounds.  
Let the Soul be rais'd and suitably  
mov'd; let the Heart and Voice  
join together, and the Affections  
keep pace with the Tongue.

If the Heart be absent or out of  
tune, 'twill spoil the Musick of the  
sweetest Song, and render the sof-  
test Voice, like *tinkling Cymbal*  
or *sounding Brass*, inharmonious  
and disagreeable in the Ears of  
God.

This will be the Work of Hea-  
ven; Labour after an heavenly  
Frame of Mind: 'Twill be the  
Work of a whole Eternity; let us  
begin the blessed Exercise now,  
and inure our selves beforehand.  
Let us so sing the *Psalms of David*  
here on Earth, that we may sing  
the *Song of Moses*, the Servant of  
the Lord, and the *Song of the*  
*Lamb* for ever. *Amen.*

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## OBJECTIONS consider'd against the Duty of SINGING.

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## SERMON IV.

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PSAL. LXVII. 3, 4.

Let all the People praise thee, O God, let all the People praise thee : O let the Nations be glad, and sing for Joy.

I Am to answer the *Objections* against Singing in the *Worship* of God. This is the only thing that can be thought unpleasant in our whole Undertaking ; and 'twere pity to interrupt the Harmony

Harmony of our Discourses with Ser. IV.  
the ungrateful Jarrings and Diffi-  
cords of *Controversy* (the most  
unsuitable thing in the World to  
our present Subject) did not the  
Difficultys and Scruples of some  
People require it.

That I may perform what is ex-  
pected from me, I shall but just  
mention the Argument in my  
Text, and then reply to the most  
considerable *Objections* that are pro-  
duc'd against this Duty.

In the Verse foregoing the *Psal-*  
*mist* Ver. 2. prays for the Conversion of  
the *Gentiles*, That God would  
make known his way upon Earth, his  
*saving Health among all Nations* ;  
then follow the words of my Text,  
*Let the People praise thee, O God,*  
*let all the People praise thee :* intimat-  
ing, that the knowledg of  
Salvation would be such an infi-  
nite Mercy to the World, as not  
only to invite, but oblige *all Mankind*  
to publish and resound the  
Praises of God. And that we may  
not be at a loss how this ought to  
be perform'd, he expresses himself  
more clearly in the following

Ser. IV. words: *O let the Nations be glad,*  
 Ver. 4. *and sing for Joy;* i. e. express their  
 Praises in joyful Songs and Tri-  
 umphs, as the word in the Ori-  
 ginal does plainly signify. So  
 that to praise God by Singing is a  
 Practice not only very suitable to  
 Buxt. Opus the State of the Gospel, but a  
 XXX An- Duty now to be perform'd by all  
 dorum. People; as being what was not  
 only pray'd for, but foretold of  
 antient time by the inspir'd Pro-  
 phet.

And is it not then strange, that  
 a Duty so reasonable and becom-  
 ing, so clear and express, so no-  
 ble and excellent, so pleasant and  
 useful, as appears from the fore-  
 going Discourses, should meet with  
 opposition from any? When if  
 we remain silent, or hold our Peace,  
 it might be expected (if such a  
 thing were possible) that as our  
 Luk. XIX. Lord himself speaks, *the Stones*  
 40. *would immediately cry out.* And  
 had we such a sense of the adora-  
 ble Majesty and Perfections of  
 God, and those immense Benefits  
 he hath bestow'd upon us, as they  
 deserve, we should find the Prac-  
 tice

tice we are pleading for necessary, if it were only for the Relief of our Nature ; nay sometimes, for ought I know, for the Preservation of Life it self : for our Hearts might be ready to burst, and we might even die under our Joys, if in some special Cases we should not be allow'd giving them vent in the loftiest Strains, and loudest Shouts of Thanksgiving and Praise.

But blessed be God, among those who have formerly oppos'd this Practice of Singing, there are many now convinc'd of its being a Gospel-Duty; and they who in this particular dissent from us, are considerably lessen'd in their Numbers. This is owing to the successful Industry of several of Mr. Mai-  
their worthy Ministers, whom God sters, Mr.  
hath rais'd up from among them- Collins,  
selves, who have strenuously asser- Mr. Allen,  
ted and vindicated this Practice, Mr. Sten-  
and hereby had occasion of giving nett, Mr.  
proof not only of their Skill in Piggott,  
Argument, but in the Art too they Mr. Harri-  
have defended, by those excellent son,  
Composures wherewith One of Mr. Sten- Mr. Keach.  
them hath oblig'd the Christian nett.  
Church.

Ser. IV. And therefore what hath been  
perform'd of late years might  
have superseded any further At-  
tempt of this kind, were it not  
that in this Publication there is  
intended *a more ample and compleat*  
*Treatise of Psalmody*, than any we  
have seen extant; and 'tis fit that  
in this place we take notice of the  
Objections that are made against  
this Duty, in answering of which  
I shall offer some things that I do  
not find observ'd by those that  
have gone before me. And that  
this Discourse may not exceed in  
proportion those of my Brethren,  
it must not be expected I reply to  
*every* Objection, only to the most  
considerable; which if fairly an-  
swer'd, the others will fall of  
course; as when we lop off the  
main Boughs of a Tree, all the  
other little Branches and Twigs  
do fall along with them. I shall  
dispose them into the following  
Order, and consider,

I. Those Objections that are le-  
vel'd against the *Duty* of  
Singing.

II. Against

- II. Against the *Matter* to be Ser. IV.  
sung.
- III. Against the *Persons* to be  
employ'd. And,
- IV. Against the *Manner* of the  
Performance.

I. They that oppose the Duty,  
do assert, *It is antiquated with the  
Ceremonial Law*; that now it is  
needless under the *Gospel*; that it is  
without Prescription; and that it is  
very unsuitable to the present bewil-  
dered and afflicted State of the Church.

§. I. They represent this Prac-  
tice as antiquated, and object a-  
gainst it as a part of the Ceremonial  
Worship under the Law, which is  
abolish'd; and they imagine we  
are now to praise God only by  
making secret melody in the Heart,  
without any artificial Tunes or  
Modulation of the Voice.

That which hath led them into  
this Mistake, is the wrong Opin-  
ion they have conceiv'd of this  
Duty, as being purely Ceremonial;  
whereas among the Jews it was  
really of a mixt nature, viz. partly  
Ceremonial, and partly Moral.

*Objections consider'd against*  
Ser. IV. What was Ceremonial refer'd on-  
ly to the manner of Performance  
under the *Levitical Priesthood*,  
which was in a very pompous man-  
ner, with a variety of musical In-  
struments, and Persons, who as  
Officers or Masters in Musick, did  
direct and preside in the manage-  
ment of it. This, I am of Opin-  
ion, did die and was bury'd with  
the *Jewish Ceremonys*; but the Prac-  
tice of Singing still remains as a  
part of *natural Religion*, and is of  
standing and universal Obligation:  
This, if duly consider'd, wou'd I  
hope remove the Difficultys a-  
bout this Duty. The use of mu-  
sical Instruments, &c. was only a  
ceremonial Appendage or external  
Solemnity, and of it self no ra-  
tional part of Worship; but to  
sing forth the Praises of God with  
our Lips is of a different nature,  
and falls under another Conside-  
ration. And tho' the *Jewish man-*  
*ner* of performing this Duty be  
now ceas'd, it does not follow  
that therefore there must be no  
Singing at all; or that because the  
*Harp* and *Cymbal* are laid aside,  
our

our Mouths must be seal'd up too. Ser. IV.  
None can be ignorant how strenuously the Apostle Paul does plead for the abolishing of the Jewish Ceremonys, and particularly in the second Chapter of his Epistle to the *Colossians*; and yet in the very next Chapter he recommends to them the Practice of singing Psalms, which certainly he would never have done were this to have been rank'd among the number of the former. His exhorting them to do this with *Col. III.* Grace in their Hearts, and to make melody in their Hearts to the Lord, Eph. V. 19. does no way forbid vocal Singing; any more than because it was their Duty also to pray with the Heart, they ought not to use their Voices in Prayer. It is evident this was only to direct them in Singing, that while they were employ'd in the outward Duty, they should take care it be with a suitable Disposition of Spirit, both being put together, Singing and making melody in the Heart.

To conclude, it should methinks tend to reconcile Persons to this Practice,

Ser. IV. Practice, that we plead for no  
 more than what is *necessary* to the  
 decent and lively discharge of a  
 Duty which is written with the  
 Pen of Nature upon Mens Hearts ;  
 letting all other pompous Obser-  
 vances remain where our Saviour  
 and his Apostles left them : and  
 if Singing in the Worship of God  
 be a part of natural Religion, it  
 answers

§. 2. The next Objection against  
 it *as a needless thing* : For what can  
 be more necessary than that which  
 our Reason dictates to be a piece  
 of Homage, indispensibly due  
 from Creatures to their Maker  
 and Benefactor ? To say that prai-  
 sing of God by Singing is needless  
 or superfluous, because it *may be*  
*done as well by Prayer*, is a mistake ;  
 which may be evinc'd from the  
 nature of the thing, as well as ex-  
 perience. Besides, we are not to  
 take the Measures of our Duty  
 from what *we* judg proper or  
 needful, but from the *Will* and

\* Eph. V. Command of Christ \*. It would  
 19. Col. be, I confess, an expeditious way  
 III. 16. to shrink Religion into a meagre  
 Jam. V. 13; Skeleton,

Skeleton, a thin Shadow, if we Ser. IV.  
were oblig'd to do no more than ~~~~~  
what our corrupt and self-indul-  
gent Nature should think necessa-  
ry: Might we not then argue as  
strongly against the Lord's Sup-  
per? Can you not think of his  
dying Love when you pray or  
hear the Word preach'd? What  
need of going to the Table? But  
as this is an Ordinance, own'd to  
be instituted on purpose for the  
commemorating of Christ's Death  
and Sufferings; so why may not  
singing of Psalms be a distinct  
Ordinance, appointed for the ce-  
lebrating in an especial manner the  
Praises of God? And can we be  
so disingenuous as to refuse exal-  
ting the Name of God in any way  
that is possible and lawful for us,  
who in such numberless ways hath  
been infinitely merciful and gra-  
cious to us?

§. 3. 'Tis objected that this is  
a Practice *without New Testament  
Prescription*; and would you have  
us sing without warrant from  
Christ? To make good this Ob-  
jection, they endeavour to enervate  
the

Ser. IV. the force of those Passages we produce from the New Testament for the establishing our Practice.

As to that which mentions our Saviour's singing an Hymn with the Disciples, they would make us believe the original word imports no more than simple giving of Thanks, without Singing; but all who understand Greek, and will be impartial, must confess that the word does in its primary and proper sense signify such a praising of God as is perform'd by Singing. To cite Authoritys can be of no use to the Unlearn'd, and to those who are conversant in this Tongue it is notorious; besides, the sense of this word is so fully clear'd in some late Treatises, that I shall refer you to them \*, where you have the Judgment of Austin, Constantine, Suidas, Calvin, Beza, and our Countrymen Ainsworth, Leigh, and many more that might be added. But it may suffice to

\* Singing of Psalms vindicated from the Charge of Novelty, printed by Mr. Parkhurst, Mr. Allen's Essay, and the Vindication of it, convince

convince the unskilful Reader of Ser. IV. the sense of the word *Hymn* (which is but an abbreviation of the Greek word  $\upsilon\mu\nu\sigma\tau\epsilon$ , or *Hymnos*) that learned Men, by common Consent, have adopted it into the English Language to signify a grave Song of Praise. To conclude, we have reason to acquiesce in this sense of the word, inasmuch as it is generally acknowledg'd our Saviour did actually sing after his last Supper\*, according to the custom of the Jews, who in the Paschal Night, after they had eaten the Lamb, did use to sing some of David's Psalms; which solemn Hymns they call the great *Hallel*, and which began at *Psal. CXIII.* and ended with *Psal. CXVIII.* Hence therefore the word  $\upsilon\mu\nu\sigma\tau\epsilon$  must imply more than bare giving of Thanks, viz. such a giving of Thanks as hath Singing conjoin'd with it.

To those Places in St. Paul's Epistles which we alledg for this

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\* See Lightfoot, Patrick, Jurieu, Whitby,  
G. &c.

Ser. IV. Duty, they say the Apostle requires speaking only, and teaching and admonishing one another. They can't deny they are further directed to sing, and to make melody: but they evade this, by telling us, it is confin'd wholly to the Heart; singing with Grace in your Hearts, so singing and making melody in your Hearts to the Lord: and that these Expressions have no respect at all to vocal Singing. This we deny, and say, that those who dissent from us must acknowledg these Actions of speaking, teaching and admonishing, do undeniably imply the use of the Voice. This being granted, the Nature of the things, in which we are to use our Voice, do sufficiently determine the manner of doing it, viz. by Singing; the Duty requir'd being such as was to be perform'd in Psalms, Hymns, and spiritual Songs, which all who are impartial and ingenuous must own were compos'd and form'd for Singing. But the Apostle says, Singing with Grace in your Hearts, and making melody in your Hearts: 'Tis granted,

ted, and no doubt 'tis a great Du-Ser. IV.  
ty to do so ; but then this was ~~not~~ not to exclude singing with the  
*Voice*, but only to caution us that  
we rest not in the *external part* of  
the Duty. But how can we teach  
and admonish one another in Sing-  
ing ? I reply, it would be no wrong  
done to the Text, if we say that  
the word *εαυτοίς*, *one another*, may  
be rendred [your selves] for so  
our Translators have rendred the  
same word, *Eph. V. 19*. And in-  
deed while we are singing, we  
have a special Opportunity and  
Help to instruct and admonish *our  
own Souls* ; as that by dilating the Sound,  
and prolonging the Voice,  
there is more time given for the  
fixing our Hearts upon that which  
is sung with more delightful Me-  
ditation. But as I do not deny  
the word may be and is translated  
*to one another*, so how our mutual In-  
struction and Edification is pro-  
moted in the practice of Singing,  
is plainly and fully set forth al-  
ready by him who from this Text  
hath open'd the nature of the  
Duty. Thus I have with brevity  
vindi-

Ser. IV. vindicated the principal Places of  
the New Testament, that are produc'd for this Duty of Sing-  
ing, from the Exceptions that are brought against them. There are some other Scriptures which will fall in our way to be spoken to in their proper Places.

§. 4. The last Objection against Singing in the Worship of God is, That it is *unsuitable to the present bewildred and afflicted State of the Church.*

There is so little in this, that there needs not much to be spoken to it: Besides, I do not find it urg'd in the Writings of our modern Opposers, who seem to have dropt it, as being conscious, I suppose, of the Weakness of it. The Church's Afflictions are so far from being an Objection, that I think them rather an Argument for the performance of this Duty; and because she is in a bewildred State, she has the greater need of something to recreate and refresh-

Prov. XXXI. 6. her, which might be like giving of Wine to him that is of a heavy Heart. And it is worthy our no-  
tice,

tice, that many of the Psalms are Ser. IV.  
wonderfully suited to the lowest  
Condition and most afflicted State  
of the Church, plainly enough sig-  
nifying the end of their Compo-  
sure, and when we ought to make  
use of them. And we do not find  
the Jews, tho often brought into  
a very low and bewildred Condi-  
tion, did upon this account desist  
from this part of religious Wor-  
ship. We read indeed that when  
they were under the Babylonish  
Captivity, they hung their Harps Psalm  
upon the Willows; but the follow-CXXXVii.  
ing words give us reason to be-<sup>2</sup>.  
lieve this was upon a very singular  
occasion; viz. when their Enemys  
did insult over them, and by way  
of Scorn did require them to en-  
tertain 'em with some of their  
Musick, and let 'em hear one of  
those Songs which were wont to  
be sung in the Temple: otherwise  
'tis more than probable they did  
now and then refresh themselves  
with this Divine Musick, and for  
this, when led into Captivity,  
they carry'd their Harps along  
with them from *Jerusalem*, or pro-  
cur'd

Ser. IV. cur'd those Instruments in *Babylon*, tho now upon the insulting, and barbarous usage of their Ene-

\* Jam. V. 13. <sup>is con-</sup> mys they laid them aside \*. Much more might be said in answer to this Objection, but I have spent too ready in Serm. II. much time upon it already. I come

II. To the second Clas of Ob-  
jections, *viz.* such as are level'd  
against the *Matter of the Duty*.  
Those mention'd are against the  
*Act of Singing*; these against the  
*Matter* that is usually sung in our  
publick Assemblys, *viz.* the Psalms  
of *David, Asaph* and others. Here  
it is objected, That the *Matter of*  
*them frequently does not suit our*  
*Case*: That there are many Passages  
we cannot sing with *Truth*, nor o-  
thers with *Charity*; and further-  
more, to use these in the *Worship of*  
*God is to introduce a Form*, and to  
stint and limit the *Gifts of the Spirit*.

Before I reply to these Objec-  
tions, I shall give you a brief Ac-  
count of our Opinion concerning  
the *Matter* to be sung in publick  
*Worship*. And,

i. Tho

1. Tho we approve and shall Ser. IV. presently vindicate the Practice of ~~the~~ our Churches in singing *David's Psalms*, yet we are not against other Composures. However,

2. What of *this kind* may be allow'd to be sung, we should advise the *Matter* of them to be collected from the Holy *Scriptures*; in turning of which into *Metre*, a diligent regard ought to be had to the *Text*, and the *Sense* at least to be carefully retain'd: and it may not be amiss that we here caution against too great a liberty to the flights of a *Poetical Fancy*, lest by being too profuse, it detract from the *Sense* and *Beauty* of the *Scriptures*, which always appear best in their own naked *Simplicity*.

3. We do not this out of any mean, irreverent and unbecoming Thoughts of *David's Psalms*, or that we would discard these from having their part in the Worship of God; but that adding others to them, we may still have a fuller Set of *Psalms*, and a more abundant variety of spiritual Songs to promote

Ser. IV. promote and further the celebrating of God's Praises in the Christian Church ; and these being for the *Matter* of them collected from the *Scriptures*, there is no *Addition* made to the Word of God hereby, as many will be ready otherwise to object.

Having thus given our Opinion about the *Matter to be sung*, I shall now consider the Objections that are made against the use of David's Psalms, and give you in a narrow Compass the *Heads* only of those Replys which may be made unto them, referring the Reader to such Authors as insist more largely upon them.

§. 1. 'Tis objected, - That the *Matter of these Psalms does not correspond to the present Case and Occasions of God's People, as more Evangelical Composures would do.*

To this we shall only say, if it be impartially consider'd, we shall find a great many at least of the *Psalms* very well adapted to the Case and Circumstances both of the Church in general, and each particular Member of it ; and provided

vided there be due care taken of a Ser. IV.  
wise and prudent choice of the ~~the~~  
*Psalm* to be sung (which is ordina- See Mr.  
rily done in our Assemblies) I think Ford's  
it will very much abate the force *Vindication*  
of this Objection. And even <sup>ture-</sup>  
where the Matter is not so <sup>of</sup> *Scrip-*  
to the present Case, yet it having  
been the *Case, of others,* we may  
find Profit in our *Meditations* upon  
it, by learning *Instruction,* and be-  
ing admonish'd and exhorted to our  
Duty from it; and this the Apo-  
stle represents as one main end of  
singing *Psalms, and Hymns, and*  
*Spiritual Songs.*

§. 2. 'Tis objected there are many *Passages in David's Psalms we cannot sing with Truth, nor others with Charity.*

What is hinted under the fore-  
going Objection might serye to  
answer this, viz. if we cannot  
express them as our *own Case,* we  
may meet with *Instruction, Convic-  
tion, Counsel and Comfort* from  
them; and to *sing the Case of o-  
thers,* with this view, is no more  
*lying to God* (as some pretend)  
than reading the same Passages with  
the

Ser. IV. the like view. As to those which they say we cannot sing with *Charity*, such as are *Imprecations* and *Curses* upon wicked Men; whereas the Gospel teaches us to wish Evil to no Man, but to desire the Good of All; I shall only say, that we are not to wish the Judgments and Curses of God upon any as Enemys to our *private Persons* and *Interests*; however (tho the Imprecations in *David's Psalms* were immediate *Inspirations*, and perhaps often *Predictions* that are not to be drawn into Example) yet so far as it appears Men are *implacable Enemys* to Christ and his Kingdom, we may imprecate the Judgments of God upon them. But granting these Passages were unsuitable to an *Evangelical Spirit*, yet a good Improvement may be made of them in our Meditations, as has been already suggested.

§. 3. 'Tis further objected, that the use of Scripture-Psalms will introduce a *Form*, and to sing by a prelimited and prestinted *Form* is to lay a Restraint upon the *Spirit of God*.

This

This is no Restraint when the Ser. IV. Duty cannot be otherwise perform'd. *~~~~~*  
To urge this Objection is to say, that either we must *not sing at all*, or that what is sung be as to the Matter of it *immediately indited*, or an *extempore Effusion*: For if we must not sing by a *Scripture-Form*, neither ought we to sing by a form of *human Composure*. And if the Matter to be sung must be *immediately indited*, then either there can be but one sing at a time; or if every one be allow'd, then it must be by the other's penning or reciting what is in his Mind, and so it becomes a *Form* to all the rest. There is no way then of Singing left, but to suppose every Person to have the Gift of immediate composing; but then should these sing all together, what Disorder and Confusion may we imagine it must produce in the Church? For we cannot suppose (as not having any Instance of it) that every one should have the same Thoughts, express the same Words and Numbers too, and sing in the same

Ser. IV. Tune at the same time. From whence it follows, that either there must be no Singing at all in the Church; or if it be done to Edification, it must be by a *Form*, the *Nature* of the Duty being such as to require it. The Case of Singing is not the same with that of Prayer: for Prayer may be perform'd without a Form, there being but one Person who is the mouth of all the rest; but Singing cannot, because there every one is to use his own Mouth: And therefore it is no stinting of the Spirit to do that by a Form, which cannot be otherwise done without a *Miracle*. And thus I have answer'd those Objections that are level'd against the Matter of the Duty. We proceed,

III. To those that are produc'd against the Persons to be employ'd in this Duty of Singing. If Singing in the Worship of God may be allow'd, some will tell us, That according to Primitive Practice but one Person ought to perform this Office in the Church: Others are for excluding

excluding Women from the benefit of Ser. IV.  
this Ordinance. But the last Ob-~~jection~~  
jection, and which carrys the  
greatest plausibleness with it, is  
against *promiscuous Singing*; that is,  
the concurrence of Good and Bad  
together in this Work: For wicked  
Men, they think, cannot sing God's  
Praises, and good People ought not to  
do it in their Company. I shall re-  
ply to what is objected under these  
Particulars.

§. i. That *one only as the Mouth*  
*ought to sing*, and the rest to con-  
cur with their *silent Consent*; as in  
Prayer the Minister is the Mouth,  
and the rest join with their secret  
*Amen*. The ground they have  
for this Objection must be *Scrip-*  
*tur-e-Evidence*, or *Primitive Prac-*  
*tice*. To begin with the latter, I  
do not find they have any thing  
from *Primitive Practice* (after the  
ceasing of extraordinary Gifts)  
that gives them the least Counte-  
nance. A learned \* Author tells<sup>\*</sup> *Inquiry*  
us, "That the Manner of the <sup>into the</sup> *Constitut.*  
" Primitive Singing was such as <sup>and Worship</sup>  
" the People bore a part in it: <sup>of the Pri-</sup>  
And *Origen* gives us this account of *mitive*  
it, *Church.*

Ser. IV. it, “That it was ἐμμελῶς καὶ συμφωνῶς,   
 ~~~~~ “ in good Tune and Concert; i.e.  
 De Ora- the People singing with their Voi-  
 tione. ces all together. Pliny the younger  
 tells us, “ That in his time Chris-  
 tians us'd to meet together be-  
 fore day, *Carmen Christo dicere*  
 “ *secum invicem.* Some quote  
 this Passage to prove Antiphonal  
 Singing, and tell you the words  
 are to be thus rendred, “ They  
 “ sung an Hymn by course, or one  
 “ against another; tho doubtless  
 they are here more truly rendred,  
 They sung a Hymn one with ano-  
 ther, or *among themselves*: and  
 they who understand the Genius  
 of the Latin Tongue will allow it.

*Introduct.* And the learned Dr. *Cave* does  
*to Lives of* thus translate that Passage. But  
*Prim. Fa-* this is not the Matter here in  
*thers. See* dispute; be this how it will, it is  
*Discourse of* most plain from hence, that the  
*Cathedral* People bore a part in this Work of  
*Worship.* Singing, and that it was not com-  
 mitted only to the performance of  
 one Person. I shall say no more,  
 but recommend to those who have  
 an inclination to consult further a-  
 bout this Matter, the perusal of a

little anonymous Treatise lately Ser. IV.  
publish'd, and entitled, *Singing of Psalms vindicated from the charge of Novelty.* You see then there is no foundation for this Objection in Primitive Practice.

If there be any force in it, 'tis from Scripture-Evidence, and the chief they produce is in those words of the Apostle: *How is it 1 Cor. then, Brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a Psalm, hath a Doctrine, hath a Tongue, &c.* i.e. as Beza observes, one hath a Psalm, another hath a Doctrine, another hath a Tongue; not that every one had all these. Now, says the Apostle, *let all things be done unto edifying.* He speaks here of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit: To one was given the Gift of Tongues, to another the Gift of Prophesying, to another the Gift of composing Psalms by the affliction of the Spirit, as Dr. Hammond observes upon the place; now let all things be done unto edifying. And how must this be? why not that all should exercise these Gifts at the same time, but

Ser. IV. one after another, as you may see  
in the 31st Verse; *Ye may all prophesy*, says the Apostle, *one by one*,  
*that all may learn, and all may be comforted.* He directs them to do  
it *one by one*, that is, one at a time; so he that had the Gift of  
Psalmody, he alone must sing for that time. And it being an ex-  
traordinary Gift confin'd to that Person, it requir'd this extraordi-  
nary way of performing it, and cou'd not be otherwise. The In-  
ference which those that dissent from us draw from hence, is this,  
*That only one Person ought to sing in the Church, and the rest, as in Prayer,*  
*to join with their secret Consent.*

The Answer which may be gi-  
ven to this is, I think, very easy  
and plain; for tho it be granted  
the Apostle speaks here of the  
*extraordinary* Gift of Psalmody,  
which some had in the times of the  
Apostle (And this seems to be  
one way of Prophesying, and a  
method which in those times the  
Holy Ghost did use to instruct  
and edify the People; and there-  
fore when there were any, who  
were

were thus directed to exercise Ser. IV.  
their Gift, the People ought to give their attendance to it) yet we challenge any Persons to prove that the Christian Church had *no other way* of singing Psalms than this. We do assert the contrary, and that besides this extraordinary Gift, it was the Practice of the Church to sing *all together*, or with consent of Voices. That this was their *more ordinary* and *stated way* of worshipping God, there are Examples already given of it by him who hath undertaken to prove the Duty. Besides, the *Gentile Church*, in thus singing the Praises of God, does but fulfil the *Prophecy* in my Text, and many others that are mention'd of her in the Old Testament. The exercise therefore of an extraordinary Gift, as it is no proof that the Church had *no other way* of singing the Praises of God; so that being now *ceas'd*, is much less an Argument against our present Practice; nay is rather an *Argument to confirm it.*

As to this I do not find they have any thing to support it from *antient Practice*: For if we consult *Antiquity*, we shall find Women were permitted to sing in the Church as well as Men. Of Women singing in the Primitive Church, we find *Tertullian* \*, *Socrates*, *Theodore*, and others make mention. That which our Opposers harp upon are those Places of the Apostle, *1 Cor. XIV. 34.* and *1 Tim. II. 11.* where he enjoineth *Silence to Women*, and that they be not permitted to speak or teach in the Churches. But to any who consult those Passages, and the Scope of the Apostle, it will appear his words are to be confin'd only to the Womens usurping an *Authority to prophesy*, and become *publick Instructors* in the Church. This upon many Ac-

\* Quantam autem castigationem merebuntur illæ, quæ inter Psalmos, vel in quacunque Dei mentione, reiectæ perseverant?  
*L. de Virgin. &c. 16.*

counts would be very indecent; Ser. IV.  
and therefore in such a capacity,  
and in this way, he would not  
*suffer a Woman to speak, but to be*  
*in Silence:* Nay, if it were only to  
ask a Question, in order to be re-  
solv'd, he would not have them  
propound it publickly, but to ask  
their Husbands at home: *For it is*  
*a shame* (says he) *for Women to*  
*speak in the Church;* i. e. to pro-  
pound any thing publickly before  
the Assembly, either out of pre-  
tence to inform others, or tho' it  
were only to be inform'd them-  
selves. It will be evident to any  
who consult these Places, that the  
Apostle confines himself to this:  
And therefore here is nothing  
that should debar Women from  
bearing a part in Psalmody,  
and joining with the Church in  
*praising God* by singing, it being *no*  
*Act of Authority*, and the Reason  
of it *common*. Besides, it being,  
as I mention'd before, a part of  
natural Religion, Women are to  
reckon themselves oblig'd to the  
performance of it, who have as  
many Considerations to induce and-

Ser. IV. ingage them as the Men. And  
next to praying in secret, and in-  
structing their Children and young  
Ones at home, I know not in what  
they can so well employ this no-  
ble and glorious Instrument the  
Tongue, than in singing the Prai-  
ses of God in his Church. And  
whether this may not be one,  
if not a *principal* Reason, why  
God, in his adorable Wisdom, has  
distinguish'd by its pleasant Soft-  
ness the Voice of the Woman from  
that of the Man, to temper the  
Sound, and render it more sweet  
and melodious when they are  
join'd together in singing his Prai-  
ses, is what I have thought not  
altogether unworthy of our Con-  
sideration. It has therefore, I  
must confess, been with some  
Concern and Offence that I have  
observ'd many Women sitting in  
the publick Assembly, as having  
nothing to do when the Praises of  
God have been sung by others.  
They have taken no part in this  
heavenly Exercise, as tho it were  
not allow'd them; or if it be,  
they had no Inclination or Heart  
unto

unto it. I wish such as have in-Ser. IV. dulg'd themselves in this culpable Omission would henceforwards reform. But,

§. 3. The last Objection I think worth mentioning at present is against *promiscuous Singing*, the Concurrence of Good and Bad in this Work : *For wicked Men, they think, cannot sing the Praises of God, and good People ought not to do it in their Company.*

In answer to this we readily confess, that no People have so much Cause, or have their Hearts so well qualify'd to sing the Praises of God as devout and holy Souls : Further, that the wicked or unregenerate cannot sing, nor indeed perform *any other Duty* as they ought : They cannot *make Melody to the Lord*, as the Apostle directs, by *singing with Grace in their Hearts.* All this is readily granted, but what will our Opposers infer from hence? That therefore ungracious Persons ought not to ingage in this Duty ? Or that good People ought to refrain from this part of the Worship of God, while *they are*

*Objections consider'd against*  
Ser. IV. are present? I think neither. If  
the Reason be conclusive in this, it should be acknowledg'd so in a parallel Case: If unregenerate Persons may not praise God, neither ought they to pray to him (nor indeed perform any Act of religious Worship) for ungracious Prayer is as unacceptable to God as ungracious Psalmody, and the same may be said of other Dutys.

But we answer further, that Mens unfitness for Duty does not disannul their Obligation to the performance of it. It is their Duty to pray to God, and to praise him, this is of natural and necessary Obligation: And being their Duty, they ought to perform it with Grace in their Hearts. That they do not is their Sin, but then wholly to omit it would be a greater Sin: The one is Hypocrisy, the other Atheism.

Again, tho it be true that wicked People cannot praise God for those things which the Regenerate can, nor what they do of this kind can they do it in such a manner; yet they have many things

things to adore and bless God for, Ser. IV.  
as the Excellencys of his Nature, *~~~~~*  
his wonderful Perfections, mani-  
fested and display'd in the Works  
of Creation and Providence. They  
have many temporal Blessings, Pre-  
servations and Deliverances, and  
which yet lead to higher ones, to  
praise him for. They ought to  
bless him for the Mercys. of his  
common Bounty, when they can-  
not praise him for the Blessings of  
his special Grace. Hence there-  
fore we find there is a general  
Command upon all Men to sing  
and give Thanks unto the Lord :

*Sing unto the Lord all the Earth.* So, Ps. XCVI.  
*Make a joyful Noise all ye Lands.* 1.  
And, *Sing unto God ye Kingdoms of the Earth.* And it hath been well  
observ'd upon the CVIIth Psalm,  
That Travellers, Prisoners, sick  
People, Seamen being sav'd from  
several Distresses, they are all of  
them commanded to praise the *Read from  
Lord for his Goodness,* and to de-v. 6, to 37.  
*clare his Wonders before the Sons of  
Men.*

And as the Unregenerate may  
thus have many things to praise  
God

Ser. IV. God for, so they are capable of retaining some sense of these Mercys upon their Hearts, and by the Advantage of common Grace are capable of making some Returns of Gratitude for the same; tho what they do of this kind falls short of saving Sincerity.

After all, they are capable of receiving Instruction, Admonition, and Counsel, from singing the Praises of God; which, as I have said, is one great End of this Duty.

It being so then, that an indispensible Command is laid upon All, that nothing can disannul the Obligation, that the worst of Men have many Mercys to praise God for; that they are capable of retaining some Sense of these Mercys, and making some Returns of Gratitude, and of being admonish'd in the Performance of this Duty: Upon all these accounts they ought not to be depriv'd of the Privilege of singing the Praises of God.

That which concerns the other part of the Objection, *That good Men ought not to do it in their Company,*

pany, is no better than mere Ca-<sup>Ser. IV.</sup> vil: For the foregoing part of the Objection being answer'd, this must fall to the ground of course. For if unregenerate Men *may*, and it is their *Duty*, to sing the Praises of God; it is doubtless no sin in good Men to join with them in it, or to do it where they are present. How unfit soever the one are for the discharge of their *Duty*, it need not unfit nor ought it to hinder the other from performing theirs. That will never be imputed to us as our Sin, which it was not in our power to help or mend. If Hypocrites and wicked Men do join with us in Singing, we do not therefore join with them in their Sin. If they pretend to sing the Praises of God, but do it not with Grace in their Hearts, we cannot help that; and their Sin does not infect or pollute us. If they be not what they profess, 'tis not our Profession is false (so be our Hearts are right) but theirs that is so. *Unto the Titus I. 15.*  
*Pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defil'd and unbelieving,*  
*nothing*

*Objections consider'd against  
Ser. IV. nothing is pure.* By which it is  
 plain, that what's impure to them  
 that are defil'd, is not made im-  
 pure to them that are pure.

And thus I have answer'd the  
 Objections that are offer'd under  
 this Head, which relates to the  
 Persons to be concern'd in this  
 Gospel-Duty of Psalmody. I come  
 to the

IVth and last Head of Objec-  
 tions, which concerns *the Manner  
 of Singing*. And here several Que-  
 rys are us'd to be put; as, *Is it  
 lawful to sing in Metre?* So, *What  
 Warrant have we to sing with arti-  
 ficial Tunes?* *May we sing without  
 reading?* *Is Antiphonal Singing law-  
 ful?* or, *May we sing with musical  
 Instruments?*

As to the two former of these  
 Objections, viz. *Singing in Metre,  
 and artificial Tunes*; there is so  
 little in them, that I shall say no  
 more, than that it is as law-  
 ful to turn the Psalms, or other  
 fit matter for spiritual Songs, into  
 Metre, in order to be *sung*, as it  
 is to translate the Scriptures into

*English*

English Prose to be read ; and being Ser. IV.  
the aptest method to fit them for ~~the~~ singing, there is no doubt to be  
made of the Lawfulness of it. As  
to the Use of our Tunes, they  
being compos'd in such Numbers  
as do very well sute the *Gravity*  
of the Matter to be sung, I see  
not any thing that hath any force  
against it. More need not be said  
to this Objection.

As to the two last Querys, *Whether Antiphonal Singing, and Singing with musical Instruments be lawful?* I leave them to defend their own Cause, who are for this way of celebrating the Praises of God. We reckon our selves no farther concern'd in this Controversy, than vindicating our way, as it is us'd in our Congregations ; and therefore I dismiss that part of it which concerns *Cathedral Worship*, See Disc. and singing with *Organs*, to those of *Cathed.* who being better satisfy'd with *Worship*. that Practice, may be better able to defend it.

There remains only one thing we are concern'd to plead for, and this is a Practice which hath lately

*Objections consider'd against  
Ser. IV. lately obtain'd in some of our  
Congregations ; and that is singing  
of Psalms without reading.*

This has been matter of Scruple to some People. To remove an old Custom, tho a bad one, is like removing the antient Landmarks. But if People did duly inquire into the first Reason of this Custom, they who are such Sticklers for it (if I am not mistaken) would not express such a Zeal for its continuance. This Practice was at first owing to the Ignorance of People, who living under the Darkness of Popery, vast multitudes of them could not read. For this reason our first *Reformers* thought it much better to practise this way of singing Psalms, by the Clerk's reading Line after Line, than that such great numbers (as then were) should be depriv'd of the Benefit of this Ordinance. But blessed be God, it is now a long time since we came out of Popery : And there are but few among us but can read, or who (if they would be at the pains) might soon attain

attain it. And therefore I think Ser. IV.  
'tis high time to reform from a ~~custom~~  
Custom, which the People's Ignorance did at first necessitate them to, and which all who will use their Understanding must acknowledg does labour with many Inconveniences and Defects.

For the way of Singing by Reading does in the *first* place cause a very great *interruption* in the Musick ; and thereby retrenching from the Sweetness and Harmony of the Action, makes the Exercise abundantly more flat and dull than otherwise : This every one's Experience must inform them.

Again, it is a very great hindrance to the *understanding* of what we sing. For the reading of the Line does frequently break the Sense, and till that be given whole and intire, we know not what we sing, but are left to uncertain Conjectures ; and before the whole Sense be read out, we have frequently forgotten what we first sang. And as thus the Musick and Sense of the Psalm is and must oftentimes be interrupted, so likewise

Ser. IV. wise must it be a great check upon  
our *Affections*, and a hindrance to  
the Exercise of our *Graces* in this  
Duty.

As these are manifest Inconveniences, so all these are effectually provided against by that custom of Singing which some of us have brought into our Churches, viz. of singing with *Books in our hands*. For by this means every one sees the whole Sense intire before him, and is thereby capable of singing with Understanding; which in the other case, when People have no Books, it must be difficult to do. And understanding what we sing, having the Sense whole and intire under our eye, our Affections are more easily excited, and assisted to *make melody to God in our Hearts*.

Besides, By this uninterrupted way of Singing there is a greater Harmony and Life in the Musick, and consequently a greater tendency therein to raise and exhilarate the Spirits.

Again, By every one's having a Book in his hand there is this Convenience,

veniency, that it keeps us more Ser. IV.  
intent and close to the business before us, and prevents that wan-  
dering of the Eye, and careless ga-  
zing, which is too often observ'd  
in the other way. And indeed  
this is a Duty which requires so  
much Spirituality, and so close  
an Application of the Heart, that  
we should be glad of any thing  
that might be a means to prevent  
our Distractions. 'Tis true, Per-  
sons may gaze about, even tho  
they have this means to prevent  
it; but yet they cannot do it so  
*much*, nor so *easily*, unless they  
wholly neglect joining in this Duty  
with the rest of the Assembly.

I shall mention one considerable  
Advantage more in the last place,  
and this is, that it will be a great  
means of *fixing* what we sing in  
our Memorys. Weighty Matters  
deliver'd in Metre are sooner  
learn'd, and more easily retain'd.  
And the frequent singing of them  
with Books, will in time render  
them so familiar, as we may be  
able to sing without them. We  
have a notable Proof of this in the

*French*

Ser. IV. French and Dutch Churches, where

~~~ I have often seen Persons who had no Books join as readily in singing as those that had them. By frequent reading of the Psalms, they have so transcrib'd them into their Memorys, as at last to lay aside their Books. And O how excellent a Treasure would it be, to have a good number of divine and spiritual Songs reposit'd in our Memorys, ready to produce and use upon any occasion! that when we are by our selves, or with others, we can presently raise up our Hearts, and sing a Psalm and Hymn to the Lord.

Now after what has been said I may leave it to the Impartial and Unprejudic'd to judg which is the most eligible way of Singing, and most adapted to answer the Design of the Ordinance, the other Practice, or that which is here recommended.

I know but one Objection, that is of any consideration, to be alledg'd against it: And it is, that this Custom must necessarily debar those from the Benefit of this

O:di-

Ordinance, who cannot read. Ser. IV.

But first, these are but few, especially in *London*, and other *Citys* and *Towns*, where there are abundant Opportunitys, and ordinarily care taken to instruct the Poor to read. And of these the far greatest part in a very short time might learn to read, if they would but apply themselves to it. It is generally People's Sin they cannot read, and why should others suffer for their Sin?

Again, If for the sake of two or three in a Congregation we ought to omit a Custom so beneficial to the *Generality*, and so necessary to the right Performance of this Duty : For the same reason we ought wholly to omit Singing, for the benefit of a greater number, who for want of a Voice cannot sing with the Congregation ; but who may say, it would be much more profitable to them, if the Psalm were gravely and slowly read, than if it were sung.

But lastly, where the Number of such illiterate Persons is considerable, as in some remote, obscure,

Ser. IV. scure, and Country Villages, it  
may not be amiss to continue the  
other way; but so as that now  
and then, for the sake of others  
who can read, our Method be ob-  
serv'd. And in the mean time it  
were to be wish'd, that such as  
are charitably dispos'd would order  
some part of their Benevolence  
towards the erecting of Schools  
in such dark places, and procure  
that the Poor be taught to read.  
Herein they would doubtless do a  
Work highly acceptable in the  
sight of God.

As to other Objections, that may  
be rais'd against what we have re-  
commended; a Pair of *Spectacles*  
would answer for the *most part*  
those of the Aged; for I am satis-  
fy'd but very few attend our As-  
semblys, who have outliv'd the  
Use of these Helps: And a small  
Sum of Mony rais'd in the Con-  
gregation to buy a competent  
number of Books to be given a-  
way, will answer the Objections  
of the Poor.

But if after all this, People will  
cavil and be contentious, we must  
pity

pity their Weakness, and bless Ser. IV.  
God who hath shone upon us with  so great Light, as to remove our  
*most dangerous* Prejudices against the  
pure Administrations of his Wor-  
ship, when we see how difficult it  
is in lesser matters to wean Peo-  
ple from a Custom they have been  
long wedded to.

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H DIREC-

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## DIRECTIONS for the Duty of SINGING.

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### SERMON V.

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EPHES. V. latter Part of  
the 19th Verse.

— Singing and making melody  
in your Heart to the Lord.

THESE Words contain an Exhortation to the Practice of that noble and delightful Duty, of Singing the Praises of God ; and afford us some Advice and Direction for the right Performance of it. We must be inspir'd and acted, not by a *vain* and *sensual Spirit*, but by the *divine* ; and being thus prepar'd, must

must so sing, as to make melody in Ser. 'V.  
our Hearts to the Lord.

Here are several Words in this Verse relating to the Nature of this Duty, which I shall not stay to explain and open: This having been already done to my hand, I shall no further consider the Text, than it is serviceable to me in handling that part of the Subject, which is assign'd me in this Exercise; and that is to lay before you *some Practical Rules and Directions for the acceptable Performance of the Duty.* The Nature of it has been open'd, your Obligation as Christians to perform it fully prov'd, the Divine Excellency and Nobleness of it clearly manifested, the Cavils and Objections of those who are Enemys to it fully consider'd and answer'd; and now, I hope, what you have heard has so far convinc'd your Judgment, and influenc'd your Wills and Affections, that you are resolv'd either, to begin or continue in the Practice of so unquestionable and excellent a Duty, and that you are very desirous to know how you may per-

Ser. V. form it to God's acceptance, and  
 ~~~~~ the advantage of your own Souls.

This Part of the Subject is as necessary as any, for you to be instructed in; for after all that has been said, if you fail in the right manner of Performance, your labour will be lost: How excellent a Duty soever it be in it self, and how beneficial and pleasant soever it be to others, it will not be so to you; but God will be dishonour'd, and your Souls prejudic'd. I fear multitudes are very defective and faulty in this part of the Duty: There are many more who are Enemys to a *holy Performance*, than who are Enemys to the *external Duty*.

I shall divide the Directions into three parts,

- I. Such as concern the Choice of proper and suitable Matter.
- II. Such as relate to the external Manner of Performance. And,
- III. Such as respect the internal and spiritual Frame and Temper of the Soul.

I. 'Tis necessary something should be said on the first Head, because in the Choice of a Psalm, the *Metre* into which it is translated, and the *Tune* to which it is set, is too often more regarded, than the subject *Matter* of it, and its *Suitableness* to the present occasion.

§. 1. We should ordinarily chuse such Matter as is best suited to the Spirituality of the Gospel-Dispensation we live under. As now, for instance, such parts of David's *Psalms* should generally be sung, as give us the most great and worthy, the most sweet and endearing Apprehensions of the blessed and glorious God, and which tend to enkindle and stir up in us spiritual Affections, suitable to those Apprehensions.

Such *Psalms* as contain Matter of *Prayer* for divine and spiritual Blessings, and of *Praise* for the Reception of them. Such which hold forth precious Promises of the same nature, for our Faith and Hope to build upon. Such as

Ser. V. have the most immediate reference  
to our Lord Jesus Christ, the *then*  
promis'd Messias; which foretel  
what he was to do and suffer at  
his Incarnation, the Blessings he  
was to procure, and the spiri-  
tual Glory and Privileges of that  
Gospel-Church he was to erect in  
the World.

There are many such Psalms,  
which the Christian Church can  
better understand now, than the  
Jewish Church could, when they  
were first pen'd, or, it may be,  
than the Penmen did themselves.  
Tho many of these Psalms seem  
dark and obscure, if we only re-  
gard the manner of Expression,  
yet we may be sure they were  
Propheccys of Christ, and of the  
State and Privileges of the Chris-  
tian Church, if we take the Wri-  
ters of the *New Testament* to be  
infallible Interpreters of the Pro-  
pheccys of the *Old*. We can see further  
into the mysterious and spiritual  
Sense of these Passages, and so are  
capable of singing them with a much  
more Evangelical Spirit, than the  
Old Testament Believers could do.

I am far from thinking it unlaw- Ser. V.  
ful or unprofitable to sing such Psalms as wholly relate to the Jewish Church, they may as lawfully and profitably be sung as read; but surely it is best becoming and most agreeable to Christians to be much taken up in *Vocal* Praising of God and the Redeemer, for the rich Discoverys of Love and Grace to Sinners. We make but an ill Improvement of our brighter Gospel-Light and Grace, if we are not more spiritual in our Prayers and Praises than the Jews were. The Doctrine of the Trinity, the Incarnation of the Son of God, his expiatory Death and Sacrifice, his Resurrection, Ascension and glorious Exaltation, his Intercession for Sinners, their Justification by his Righteousness, and Sanctification by his Spirit; and in a word, the whole Doctrine of Christ's Mediation, with all those admirable Perfections of God that shine forth therein, are things that were but little known under the *Old Dispensation*; but they shine with a far

Ser. V. greater Brightness and Lustre under the New. Now as Believers, in those days, were most taken up in celebrating those Dispensations of God's Providence, that were then most remarkable; so should Christians be in celebrating the Work of Redemption, this being the most glorious Discovery of the Divine Perfections which God has given, or can give to this World.

I am far from confining our Praises and Thanksgivings to this Duty of Singing. These should mix themselves with all our Prayers and Phil.IV. 6. Supplications: In every thing by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God. But since the Singing and Chanting forth God's Praises has an Advantage above the bare Rehearsal of them in Prose; since this tends most to quicken and enlarge the Heart, and creates most spiritual Pleasure in the Soul; we should, in this way, offer to God those Praises and Thanksgivings which have the Mysterys and Blessings of our Redemption for the Subject-matter of them.

Upon

Upon this occasion I cannot Ser. V.  
but heartily wish, that many Parts  
of the *New Testament* were tran-  
slated into Metre, and so fitted to  
be sung in Christian Churches and  
Familys, and that the Practice did  
more generally obtain among us:  
Not to the Exclusion of *David's Psalms*, but only as a Supplement  
and Addition, because they don't  
so fully sute the State of the Gof-  
pel-Church, as they did the Jewish.  
This Part of our Christian Wor-  
ship would be much more com-  
plete and perfect, if those Doxo-  
logys and Benedictions were thus  
translated, that we meet with in  
*St. Paul's Epistles*, and other Parts  
of the New Testament. We read  
That the four Beasts and the four Rev. v. 8,  
and twenty Elders did praise Christ 9.  
by singing a new Song, saying, Thou  
art worthy, &c. Many Expositors,  
by these Elders, understand (not  
improbably) the Members of the  
*Christian Church* upon Earth; and  
then the words are an intimation,  
that in Christian Assemblies Christ  
is to be prais'd with New Songs,  
suted to the Work of Redemption,

Ser. V. and the Glory he is advanc'd to,  
and not merely with the *Psalms of David*. If you desire further Satisfaction, I refer you to Mr. Watts's ingenious Essay on this Subject, which I have seen since the Composure of this Discourse.

§. 2. Upon publick special Occasions we ought to have regard to those Providences of God that his Church and People are then under. As we are a part of Christ's Church, so we ought to be affected with the State thereof. When God's People lie under or are in danger of any general Calamity, and we are call'd to publick Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer, such *Psalms* should be chosen, as bring to our remembrance the Circumstances of God's Church in former days. His wonderful Appearances for them, when their Strength and Hope was almost quite gone, the Methods they took in their Distress, and the Success of them, and what Returns they made to God for their Deliverances; the meditating upon, and singing forth such Passages, have an Aptitude and Tendency

dency to beget in us awful Appre- Ser. V.  
hensions of the Majesty and Power, ~~~~~  
Justice and Holiness of God; and  
they will greatly help to quicken  
and strengthen our Faith and Hope  
in his Grace and Goodness, since  
he is the same God *yesterday, to  
day, and for ever*, and has the same  
Love and Compassion for his Peo-  
ple as ever.

Again, such *Psalms* are proper as  
are of a Penitential Nature, which  
contain *Confessions* of Sin, *Depre-  
cations* of deserv'd Judgments,  
*Supplications* for undeserv'd Mercys;  
which are suitable to beget and stir  
up Self-abhorrence, Shame and  
Sorrow for, Hatred and Detesta-  
tion of Sin.

*And then on days of publick Praise  
and Thanksgiving, such Psalms should  
be chosen, as do set forth and mag-  
nify those Perfections of God,  
which were most conspicuous in  
the Mercys we commemorate, and  
which are the most apt to excite  
those Graces that should be exer-  
cis'd in the most lively manner on  
those days, and such as will be best  
expressive of our Resolution, to  
trust*

Ser. V. trust and confide in God for the future. I forbear mentioning particular Psalms, that having been largely done in some of the foregoing Discourses. A Christian, who is conversant in David's Psalms, will find there are few Providences God's Church can be under, but there is something in them very suitable and applicable ; and a wise Choice would be very serviceable to bring the Minds of Christians into, and to keep them in a good Frame, throughout the Dutys of such Days.

§. 3. *In our Choice some regard should be had to the other Parts of Worship this Duty is conjoin'd with.* We must so endeavour to perform every Duty, that one may be a Preparatory to another, and that the subsequent Duty may further cherish and strengthen those holy Impressions and Affections in us which the foregoing began : that tho we pass from one Duty to another, yet that which is the main end and design of all Dutys, viz. the glorifying of God, and the working up our Souls to a Divine and Godlike

Godlike Temper, may still be car- Ser. V.  
rying on more and more. When Singing precedes Prayer, something should be sung that may best compose the Mind to a becoming Reverence for that Duty; and when it follows Preaching, something should be chosen that may be proper to second and further press home the Truths we have heard. When there is this blessed Harmony between one Duty and another, we shall perform them with the greatest Pleasure and Profit. I dare appeal to the Experience of serious Christians, whether they have not found the singing the self-same Psalm much more sweet and reviving to their Spirits at one time, when this Direction has been observ'd, than at another, when no regard has been had to it. Again, on Sacrament-days, when we have been commemorating the matchless Love of our dear Redeemer, at the close of that Ordinance something should be sung that may keep alive, and further excite those Graces we have been in the Exercise of, and that may send

§. 4. Christians in their private Familys should have regard to their Family-State and Circumstances, and those particular Providences of God they are under, especially when they are peculiar and remarkable, either in a way of Judgment or Mercy. A suitable Choice at such times will improve the Seriousness of our Frame, and make the Dispensations more affecting and impressive. But care must be taken that our Joy or Sorrow don't degenerate into sinful Extremes, that under the Notion of Duty we do not cherish such a Temper of Soul as is really dishonourable to God, and injurious to ourselves, and which ought to be striven against.

§. 5. Lastly, Private Christians may regard the particular State and present Frame of their own Souls. Tho it be unquestionably lawful to sing such Psalms as don't exactly suit our own Circumstances, either outward or inward, because they are profitable for Instruction and Admo-

Admonition; yet we shall be most Ser. V.  
affected when what we sing is  
suited to our Condition, and is  
expressive of the inward Sense and  
Language of our Hearts. Those  
sing with the most Pleasure, that  
sing *David's Psalms with David's*  
*Spirit.* In short, Christians should  
consider what special Graces they  
have more than ordinary need to  
have exercis'd and increas'd, what  
Corruptions to be mortify'd and  
kept under, what Difficultys, and  
Temptations, and Afflictions they  
are call'd to contend and grapple  
with. Such things as these must  
direct them both in the matter of  
their *Prayers* and *Singing*, when  
the choice is left to themselves.  
So much for the first *General Head*.  
I now proceed in the second Place,

II. To such Directions as relate  
to the external manner of Perfor-  
mance. I don't pretend to instruct  
you in the Art of Singing, 'tis not  
my proper Busines was I capable  
of it; I shall only mention a few  
things that Reason and the Na-  
ture of the Duty plainly suggest.

§. I.

Ser. V. S. I. Some Regard ought to be had  
to external Harmony, that there be Melody made with our Voices as well as Hearts. If no care be taken about the Tune and Metre, there will be nothing but Discord and Confusion ; such Singing will be a great Hindrance, and not a Help to Devotion. We are Sensitive as well as Rational Creatures, compounded of Body and Soul ; and while we are in this state of Union, our Senses have great Influence upon our higher Powers. Sensitive Pleasure is lawful and laudable, while it is desir'd in subordination and subserviency to that which is more refin'd and rational, and not principally for it self. Without the one it is scarce possible, in our present State, to enjoy the other, for God works upon his Creatures in a way suitable to their Nature. The innocent Pleasures of the Ear, by melodious Sounds, has experimentally been found a mighty help to excite and raise devout Affections in the Soul : Nature (as one expresses it) in this case helps Grace.

But

But here our great Care must be, Ser. V.  
that we don't take up with the  Means for the End, and mistake  
the pleasing of our sensitive Affec-  
tions and Imaginations for that  
spiritual Pleasure which holy Souls  
take in God and Things of a Di-  
vine Nature. Whenever it is  
thus, the fault is in the evil Frame  
and Temper of our Hearts, and  
does not arise from the Nature of  
the thing ; for holy Souls can and  
will improve it for holy Ends and  
Purposes. And indeed unless Sing-  
ing be so order'd, as in some mea-  
sure to be grateful to the Ear, the  
Ordinance will be expos'd to Con-  
tempt, and not serve the Ends of  
Devotion. *God is the God of Or-  
der, and not of Confusion.* I would  
not be thought to discourage those  
from this Duty who have little or  
no artificial Skill ; many can sing  
in conjunction with others, tho'  
they can't lead a Tune : and they  
that have not so much Skill as  
this, may so manage their Voices,  
as not to disturb those that have,  
and by joining with them may be  
greatly affected and edify'd, much  
more

Ser. V. more perhaps than those that have  
~ ten times their Skill, but want  
their pious Dispositions of Soul.  
Tho still I am of Opinion, that if  
such Christians have a natural Ca-  
pacity for it, some *artificial Skill*  
would be very serviceable to them,  
in the more spiritual Perfor-  
mance of the Duty : provided they  
are not so taken up with minding  
the Tune, as to be taken off from  
observing the Matter sung, and  
the Frame of Heart with which  
they sing.

§. 2. *Care must be taken that the Tunes sung, and the Manner of Singing be only such as have a Tendency to excite divine and spiritual Affections.* Psalm-Tunes ought to be solemn, and grave, not vain, and light, and airy, as if they were only adapted to please and gratify a wanton and sensual Mind: This would be to turn one of the most noble and spiritual Dutys of Religion into a mere Entertainment for the Senses and Fancys of carnal Men ; this would be to turn God's House into a *Theatre*, and would in a manner desecrate God's sacred Worship,

Worship, and make it distastful to Ser. V.  
pious Minds. The Power of *Vocal* ~~W~~  
as well as *Instrumental Musick* is  
very great, and may be abus'd to  
bad Purposes as well as improv'd  
to holy ones ; and therefore only  
such Tunes must be us'd in God's  
House, as becomes his Majesty and  
Holiness, and the Gravity and  
Spirituality of the Worship we  
are ingag'd in. Neither must the  
Voice be so modulated, as should  
render what is sung unintelligible  
to the greatest part of the Wor-  
shippers ; for this would be, as to  
the Ends of *Edification*, the same  
thing as if Persons *sung in an  
unknown Tongue*.

§. 3. In the choice of the Tune,  
some regard should be had to the  
Matter sung ; that it may have an  
Aptitude to excite in us those Di-  
vine Graces, which the Matter of  
the Psalm requires and calls for.  
Nothing is more certain than that  
different Tunes have a different  
Influence and Efficacy upon the  
Minds of Men : Those that have  
a Tendency to raise our Joy and  
Thankfulness, are Enemys to Sor-  
row

Ser. V. row and Sadness of Spirit; and  
those that befriend this Temper,  
are prejudicial to the other. It  
would be very preposterous, and  
a great Incongruity, if the Ten-  
dency of the Tune should promote  
Sorrow and Grief, when the De-  
sign of the Psalm is to raise in us a  
joyful thankful Admiration of  
God's Grace and Goodness.

§. 4. Such Tunes should be ordina-  
rily sung, as the Generality of the  
Worshippers can join in; because  
Singing is a Duty incumbent up-  
on all Christians that have any ca-  
pacity for it, and is a stated Part  
of God's publick Worship: and  
therefore it is not rightly per-  
form'd when it is so manag'd as  
to shut out the greatest part of the  
Assembly from having any share  
in it. I may add,

§. 5. That it is most eligible, that  
Persons, engag'd in this Ordinance of  
Singing, should have Psalm-Books,  
that so the Duty might be per-  
form'd without the usual Inter-  
ruption of reading Line by Line.  
By this means the Sense of what is  
sung will at once lie open to their  
View,

View, and be better understood by Ser. V. them ; and there will be a more intire and continu'd Harmony, and the Affections will not be in so much danger of cooling and flattening by the frequent Pauses that are made by reading. These things are but barely mention'd, having been more distinctly treated of before. But yet I subjoin, that the Inconveniency of Reading is such as may be lawfully dispens'd with, where it cannot be remedy'd without a greater ; i. e. when without this Help the greatest part of an Assembly would be debar'd from joining in the Ordinance. Need I add,

§. 6. And lastly, That in the Performance of this Duty there must be all the external and visible Signs of Reverence and Devotion. Where these are wanting, we may, without breach of Charity, conclude, that there is not much inward Seriousness and Affection. Tho bodily Exercise alone profits little, yet God must be glorify'd with our Bodys as well as our Souls ; they are the Workmanship of God, and the Pur-

Ser. V. Purchase of Christ, and the Temple  
of the Holy Ghost: The Lord is  
for the Body, and therefore the Body  
ought to be for the Lord. In this  
Duty the Head must be uncover'd,  
the Countenance compos'd and  
serious, the Eye fixt, not roving  
and wandring; and, in a word,  
the whole external Behaviour such  
as, in the judgment of Charity,  
bespeaks an engag'd and devout  
Mind and Heart, and as becomes  
the Perfections of the God we  
worship. And whether that Pos-  
ture in Singing, which generally  
obtains among us, be so proper for  
Psalms of direct Prayer and Praise,  
I leave to your own serious deli-  
berate Consideration. I now pro-  
ceed,

III. To such Directions as respect  
the internal and spiritual Frame and  
Temper of the Soul. Tho you are  
ever so careful in observing and  
following what I have hitherto  
said, yet unless a special regard be  
had to the State and Frame of the  
Soul, all will avail nothing as to  
your Acceptance with God. Some  
of

of these Directions are such as Ser. V. concern this Duty in common *with others,* and therefore I need not much inlarge.

§. 1. *The habitual Temper and Disposition must be such as is pleasing unto God.* You must be in a converted, pardon'd, reconcil'd State. Till you have *Grace in the Heart,* and are fill'd with the Spirit, you are not qualify'd for the acceptable Performance of this Duty. The Exercise of Grace necessarily supposes the internal vital Principle; for Persons can never exercise that which they have not. Carnal and unsanctify'd Men do but debase and pollute every Duty they take in hand: Their State is unacceptable; the *Principles* from which, and the *Ends* for which they act, are not divine and supernatural, but low, base and mercenary; and consequently nothing that they do is properly pleasing unto God.

*The carnal Mind is Enmity against Rom. VIII. God; it is not subject to the Law of 7, 8. God, nor indeed can be: So then, they that are in the Flesh, cannot please God. We are only accepted Eph. L 6.*  
*in*

Ser. V. in the Beloved, to whom they have  
no vital Union, nor stand in any  
Gen.IV.4. federal Relation. The Lord had  
first Respect to Abel, and then to his  
Offering. If the Person be not ac-  
cepted, the Sacrifice will not. I  
own all the Actions of Men in a  
justify'd State are not acceptable  
to God, for they do not always  
exert the good Principles that are  
within them, and act becoming  
their Relation and Character; and  
Mat. VII. yet till the Tree be made good, the  
17, 18. Fruit can never be truly so. Wic-  
ked Men may have pleasant and  
melodious Voices, and may be well  
skill'd in the Art of Singing, and  
so may be instrumental in raising  
the Affections of pious Christians;  
but not being animated by a Di-  
vine Spirit, they are but like so  
many dead and lifeless Organs: for  
want of that which ought to be  
in them, they lose not only the  
spiritual benefit of the Duty, but  
are obnoxious to Punishment for  
their Hypocrisy and Dissimula-  
tion, for making only an external  
shew of that which they really  
have not. I design not by this  
Discourse

Discourse to take unconverted Men Ser. V.<sup>s</sup>  
wholly off from this Duty : for ~~the~~ the same Objections that lie against their *Singing of Psalms* for want of habitual Grace, lie against their *Praying*, and *Hearing*, and any other Duty ; for no Duty can rightly be perform'd without the Grace of God. I would only convince them of the Misery and Unhappiness of their present Condition, that they may not contentedly continue in it: Their moral Incapacity for Duty takes not away their Obligation to Performance, but is their Sin ; and the greater it is, the more deprav'd it speaks them to be. However, if they do their best, with those Influences of common Grace that are afforded, and do honestly desire and endeavour to do better, they are much less guilty than they would be by a total Omission.

§. 2. You must sing with Attention and Understanding. This was the the Apostle's Resolution: *I will sing with Understanding. Sing ye Praises with Understanding.* It's impossible that blind Devotion<sup>7</sup>.

. I should

Ser. V. should ever be pleasing unto God.

Tho there may be *Light* in the *Head*, when there is no *Heat* and *Warmth* in the *Heart*, yet we can never be rationally and piously affected with what we understand not; such Devotion can be no better than superstitious Frenzy and Enthusiasm. Our great Care then must be, that we are not so taken up in our Thoughts about the Tune we sing, and the Sound and Cadency of the Words, as not to mind the Excellency, Weight and Importance of the Matter sung. This is a common fault, that ought diligently to be guarded against. I fear Mens Thoughts are often employ'd in observing how they themselves and others sing, when they should attend to and be intent upon the spiritual and useful Nature of what they sing: Persons can never receive Instruction or Consolation by such kind of Singing. See then, that while your Tongues are employ'd in chanting forth the words, your *Mind* and *Thoughts* be as busily employ'd in diving into, and

\*

in

in sweet Meditation upon the spiritual Sense, and Meaning of them. Unless you have slothful and unengag'd Minds, you will find the Duty of Singing a greater help this way, than barely the reading of the words would be, there being a longer time for the exercise of Thought in the *one* than in the other.

§. 3. Yea, there must be melody in the Heart as well as the Voice: This particularly is the Apostle's Direction in my Text. If you ask what this denotes, I answer in two or three things.

(1.) That the Heart and spiritual Affections be engag'd in the Duty, as well as the Mind and Voice. It is very possible the Mind may be employ'd, and yet there may be no devout stirring of the Affections. It is one thing to know, and mind what is said and sung, and another to be deeply and seriously affected with it. When this Duty is acceptably perform'd, there is a happy conjunction of all these; Grace in the Heart will exert and put forth it self. The

Ser. V. Apostle, in his Epistle to the *Colossians*, explains what he means  
Col. III. here by *making melody in our Hearts*,  
16. by telling us we must *sing with Grace in our Hearts*. Renewing Grace is very diffusive, it reaches to all the Powers and Facultys of the Soul; we must be *sanctify'd wholly in Soul, Spirit, and Body*. But yet the Heart is the principal Seat and Subject of Divine Grace; this is what God chiefly looks at, and calls for: *My Son, give me thy Heart*. We must *sanctify the Lord God in our Hearts, make him our Fear and our Dread*. Those *Notions* of God, how sublime soever, which do not distil upon and influence the Heart; and those external *Actions*, which do not flow from a Heart set right with, and duly affected towards God, are of no account with him. And as Grace has its Throne and Residence in the Heart, so it must rule and govern there in a lively and vigorous manner; it must fix and ingage, warm and inflame the Heart. Our Hearts must burn within us; for no external Dutys

of Religion are pleasing to God, Ser. V.  
unless we are in the exercise of ~~the~~  
Grace in the performance of  
them.

(2.) This Melody denotes the variety of Divine Graces that ought to be exercis'd in this Duty. One Note makes no Melody. This is a Duty wherein the several Graces of the Spirit may and should be exercis'd; such as *Faith* and *Love*, *Desire* and *Hope*, *Humility*, *Joy* and *Delight*. And indeed I know no one particular Grace, but what there may be occasion for in this Duty one time or other.

(3.) It denotes the suitable Exercise of Grace. Every Grace should be drawn forth in its due and proper Order, according as the Matter sung shall require. The Exercise of one Grace must not exclude the Exercise of another. As in *vocal Musick*, every Note must be sung in its proper Place and Order, and there must be a skilful mixture of them, or there will be no *external Melody*; so there must be a sweet mixture of every Grace, and a seasonable act-

Ser. V. ing of them upon God, or else  
there will be no *Melody in the Heart.* It is a great part of holy Christian Wisdom, to know how to live in the suitable Exercise of Grace, and not to be acting one Grace, when God by his Word or Providence calls for another. It is a great fault in some serious Christians, that they too much indulge themselves in Fear, Sorrow, Grief, &c. whilst they neglect or seldom stir up the nobler Graces of Faith, Love, and Hope, and Delight in God; tho' these latter may be more suitable and congruous to their present Circumstances, and the Dutys they are ingag'd in. There is no true Melody in the Heart, when Persons are so defective and preposterous in the Exercise of Grace. We must take care then, that every Psalm we sing do stir up those Graces, which in the Design of God, and the Nature of the Thing, it has an Aptitude and Tendency to do.

When there is an Assembly of such Hearts, thus tun'd and employ'd

ploy'd in singing the Praises of Ser. V.  
God, they make *Melody to the ~~~*  
*Lord:* This is much more grateful  
to *God*, than the exactest and  
sweetest *Melody* of Voice can be  
to us. It's a real Pleasure to the  
Blessed God to see such a Union  
and Conjunction of Hearts, all  
animated by one and the same Spi-  
rit, breathing forth the same De-  
sires, paying the same Divine  
Worship and Adoration, all swal-  
low'd up in the Contemplation  
and Admiration of his infinite  
Excellencys and Perfections. If  
our *praising Assemblys* were but  
made up of such Worshippers, they  
would be a true Emblem of the  
*Heavenly Choir* and Society above:  
but it is greatly to be fear'd, that  
in most of them, there is much  
less *Melody in the Hearts* of Men  
than in their *Voices*; many who  
have harmonious Voices, have  
Hearts that will not stir nor move  
within them. Let every one of you  
look to your own Hearts, that  
this Melody be not wanting there;  
and then you shall be accepted of  
God, tho you sing in Society with

Ser. V. those who are Strangers to it.

Now that you may be always ready thus to sing, I'll just subjoin a few words of Advice.

*You must labour to be of an humble, thankful Temper of Soul, and make Praise and Thanksgiving your constant Employment; this should have a more considerable share in your daily Devotions than ordinarily it has. Take heed of a querelous, murmuring, complaining Spirit; for this greatly indisposes the Soul for the Work of Praise. Endeavour to live from day to day in a sense of God's Love to you, and in the exercise of Love, Joy, and Delight towards him. Just before your Entrance upon this Duty, your Thoughts should be taken up in meditating upon God's Excellencys and Perfections, your own Meanness and Unworthiness, his Goodness to you above multitudes of your Fellow-Creatures, your many Mercys and Privileges, notwithstanding your Demerits and manifold Forfeitures of them. Think upon God's astonishing Love to Sinners in Christ,*  
*and*

and the blessed Fruits and Effects Ser. V.  
of it. *Think* on the Joys of Hea- ven, and the noble Employment  
of Saints and Angels there; how  
they tune their Hearts, and with  
how strong a Breath they found  
forth the Praises of God, and of  
the Lamb. *Think* of the Torments  
of the Damn'd, and how happy  
they would reckon themselves if  
they were call'd to your Work;  
and how justly you might have  
been in their State and Place, who  
instead of praising God, are weep-  
ing, and wailing, and gnashing their  
Teeth. Such *Meditations* as these  
would be very serviceable towards  
the putting you in a suitable Frame  
for, and assisting you in the Per-  
formance of this Duty.

§. 4. There must be a humble de-  
pendance upon the Spirit of Christ,  
for his assisting, quickening Influences.  
Without these, tho the Principles  
of Grace are implanted in the  
Heart, they will not exert and  
put forth themselves. Believers  
themselves without Christ can do no-  
thing: 'Tis thro Christ's strengthening  
us, that we are enabled to do all

I 5 things:

Joh.XV.5

Ser. V. things: He works all our Works in  
 us, and for us. We must go forth  
 in his Strength, and make mention of  
 his Name, and of his only. As  
 without God's general Concourse,  
 as the God of Nature, we can't  
 perform natural Actions; so with-  
 out his Influence, as the God of  
 Grace, we can't perform spiritual  
 ones. The best of Christians have  
 need to put up the Prayer of the

Cant. IV. Spouse: *Awake, O North Wind,*  
 16. *and come thou South, blow upon my*  
*Garden, that the Spices thereof may*  
*flow out; then let my Beloved come*  
*into his Garden, and eat his pleasant*  
*Fruits.* The giving or withhold-  
 ing of the Spirit's Influences is one  
 great cause of the remarkable dif-  
 ference that there is betwixt one  
 Christian and another, and betwixt  
 the same Christian, at different  
 times, in the Performance of reli-  
 gious Dutys. In this way God does  
 signally either reward the Dilig-  
 ence, humble Dependance, and  
 Expectation of his People; or pu-  
 nish their Carelessness and Sloth,  
 their Pride and Self-Confidence.

Nom. VIII. Tho the Spirit of Christ dwells in  
 9- every

every sincere Believer, yet there Ser. V.  
is a vast Variety and Inequality as  
to the Measure of his actual Assis-  
tance and Influence ; and in pro-  
portion hereto the Hearts of God's  
People will be more or less en-  
larg'd and carry'd out in the Du-  
ty. The Spirit may justly reckon  
himself neglected and slighted,  
when there is not a deep and se-  
rious sense of our own Insufficien-  
cy, and a humble Dependance up-  
on, and Expectation of Help and  
Assistance from him.

§. 5. There must be an actual Re-  
liance upon the Merit and Intercession  
of Christ for our Acceptance. After  
the Injunction of this Duty in Co-  
lossians, 'tis immediately added;  
*Whatsoever ye do in Word or Deed, do Ch.III.15,*  
*all in the Name of our Lord Jesus;* 17.  
giving Thanks to God and the Father  
by him. The best Christians bring  
much Guilt and Pollution into the  
Presence of God with them, they  
contract much while they are be-  
fore him ; their Graces and Dutys  
are so defective and imperfect,  
that if God should be exact to mark  
Iniquity, they could not stand before  
him :

Ser. V. him: If there was not Forgiveness  
with him, there would be no Encou-  
Ps. CXXX 3, 4. ragement to fear or worship him.

Our highest Praises are infinitely beneath the Excellencys and Perfections of the Divine Nature, and unworthy of the Divine Acceptance, consider'd merely as they flow from us. Christ is that An-

Ch. VIII. gel spoken of in the Revelations,  
3. who stands at God's Altar, and has a golden Censor full of Incense, which he offers, with the Prayers and Praises of all the Saints, upon the golden Altar which is before the Throne. We must be great Strangers to God and our selves, to the just and righteous Demands of his Laws, and the Imperfection of our Dutys, if we are not sensible of the necessity of Christ's Mediation, to recommend our Persons and Services to the Divine Acceptance. And therefore we ought to exert explicite Acts of Faith upon his Satisfaction and Intercession; for we cannot justly expect the Application of his Merits, when there is no Sense of the need of them, nor any actual Reliance upon them.

§. 6. And lastly, *This Duty must Ser. V.*  
be perform'd unto the Lord; so run ~~~~~  
the words of the Text, *Singing*  
*and making Melody in your Hearts*  
*to the Lord.* It is not material,  
whether by (Lord) we here under-  
stand God the Father, or the Me-  
diator Jesus Christ; since in every  
Duty Christ is to be ey'd as the  
*proximate immediate Object,* and  
God the Father as the *final ultimate*  
one. There *is no Coming to Joh. XIV.*  
*the Father but by Christ;* and we 6.  
come to Christ, that by him we  
may be brought to God. God in  
Christ then is the Object to whom  
this Duty must be perform'd. We  
must sing in obedience to the  
*Command* of this Lord, do it as an  
*Act of Divine Worship,* which is  
due to him, and him only; with  
a *Design* to magnify and advance  
his Honour and Glory, by thus  
proclaiming his Perfections, our  
Esteem and Affection for them,  
and Trust and Confidence in them.  
We must in this way *recommend*  
him as an Object worthy of the  
Homage and Worship of the whole  
World. *These, together with our*  
*own,*

Ser. V. own, and others spiritual Edification and Comfort, ought to be the Ends we should propose to our selves in the Performance of this Duty : not any low, mercenary, selfish ones of our own, such as worldly Advantage, the Ostentation of our own Art and Skill, the Gratification of the Ears and Fancys of others, that we may be applauded by them. Nay, mere Improvement in the Art of Singing ought not to be our principal Design, tho it may be subordinately look'd at in the Performance of so religious a Duty. This would be not to sing to the Lord, but to our selves ; instead of obtaining his Acceptance, we should certainly provoke his Displeasure, and merit his Rejection and Abhorrence of us and our Sacrifices.

Thus I have gone thro the three General Heads I propos'd : And now, upon the Whole, you may easily see, whence it is that many complain, they find so little Pleasure in, and Benefit by this Ordinance ; their Esteem and Value for

for it lessens, and they are temp- Ser. V.  
ted to live in the neglect of it. ~~~  
There has certainly been some  
failure in the manner of Perfor-  
mance in some of the foremen-  
tion'd Respects, which they ought  
to be sensible of, and humbled for,  
and charge upon themselves: To  
this they should attribute their  
Unprofitableness, and not to any  
want of Aptitude and Fitness in  
the Ordinance to do them good.  
Let but Persons constantly and  
conscientiously observe the Rules I  
have laid down, and I am con-  
fident they will quickly find this  
as quickning, and edifying, and  
comforting a Duty, as most of the  
Dutys of the Gospel.

*And as for those of you that  
have a Value for this Ordinance,  
I would have you take care to  
follow these Directions, as ever  
you would reap spiritual Ad-  
vantage your selves, keep up  
the Credit of it in the World,  
and promote the Practice of it  
among others.*

But

Ser. V. But the further enlarging upon,  
and enforcing of these things,  
with suitable Arguments and Mo-  
tives, will be the Work of my  
Worthy Brother, who finishes  
what we design from this Subject.

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An

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An EXHORTATION to  
the Duty of SINGING.

SERMON VI.

PSAL. LVII. 8.

*Awake up my Glory ; Awake  
Psaltery and Harp ; I my self  
will awake early.*

**Y**OU have had the several  
Parts of this Subject of sing-  
ing Psalms in so many Dis-  
courses distinctly essay'd, with de-  
sign that the whole of it, as a  
*Duty*, might be more compleatly  
explain'd and asserted by *Us* ;  
while, as a *Gift*, the becoming  
manner of performing it is im-  
prov'd.

Ser. V. prov'd and cultivated by You: and, I hope, our joint Endeavors may do something toward the settling its Theory and Divine Regulation, its more decent and orderly Practice, the reviving its more general Use, retrieving its Glory, rescuing it from the Objections of the Scrupulous, and from the Corruptions of Levity or Superstition.

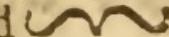
To this end the *Nature of the Duty* has been stated, that you ~~may sing with Understanding~~, that you may sing without the fear of Will-worship, or offering strange Fire. The *Excellence* of it has been display'd, as truly Angelical and Seraphic; as pleasing to God, and comely for the Upright; as that whereby we are carry'd into the Company of Angels, to join in their Work, and partake of their Joys. *Objec-*  
*tions* have been answer'd, that your Hearts may be fix'd while you sing and give Praise. The true manner of singing the Divine Praises has been directed, so as to make Melody to God, and that it may be acceptable

ceptable to him, and profitable Ser. VI.  
to us.

What remains then, but that we make the *most* of such a Duty as this? And since here's nothing else to hinder, Indifference, Drowsiness or Carelessness should not; but that we awaken all our Powers to a Work that is so much its own immediate Reward. And since the foregoing Sermons have presented you with the *Scale* of Heavenly Musick, as found in Scripture set by the *Holy Ghost*, who in all this Matter is the chief *Musitian*; practise upon it as high as you can: and tho at present the lower Notes only are within your Compas, hereafter the higher Strains shall not be beyond, your reach: for when we are made like *Angels*, we shall sing like them too in that World where Love and Harmony are in Perfection: In the mean time, we may bear an humble Part. And why should we think our Heaven can begin too soon? If the Grace of Heaven do but tune the Heart, Wonder, Love and Joy will never let your Tongue lie

Ser. VI. lie still, but will awaken your Glory,  
~~~~~ and all that is within you to bless his  
Holy Name. .

The former Part of this Psalm recounts the many Calamitys *David* was under, his Circumstances dark and gloomy as the *Cave* he was now in ; distress'd and besieg'd on every side, no way open to Relief but that toward Heaven ; he was flying before *Saul's* Cruelty, now instigated by that evil Spirit, which in the absence of *David's* *Harp* and *Psalmody*, had taken intire possession of him. The Sweet Singer of Israel was thus drove out to join Consort with the untaught Harmony of the Woods, wandering like a Vagabond, and had nothing fix'd but his Heart, and that he was resolv'd should never be remov'd from God, or from his Praise ; for even in such a time as this he could say, *My Heart is fix'd, O God ! my Heart is fix'd; I will sing and give Praise.* Fix'd in the midst of Agitations, serene within when all around was Storm and Tempest. And how Divinely Great does that Man look, whose

whose inward Harmony no Jar Ser. VI.  
and Discord of all his outward   
Affairs can shatter and destroy ?  
Who knows the Secret of fetching  
down his Consolation from Hea-  
ven, and making every thing con-  
tribute to his gradual Ascent thi-  
ther ? *David* in these straits not  
only quiet, but joyous ! under these  
Depressions, and yet will not *hang*  
*his Harp upon the Willows* ! If this  
be the Fruit of being accustom'd  
to sing the Divine Praises, may  
we all be *Psalrists*, may we all say,  
*Awake up my Glory*, &c.

It will sufficiently answer my  
purpose to take notice of the  
Terms he uses, and then to press  
the Exhortation.

### I. *Of the Terms he uses.*

#### §. I. *My Glory.*

That is, my *Soul* (say some) be-  
cause the Spirit of a Man is the  
Glory of a Man, whereby he is  
dignify'd and rais'd so much be-  
yond the *Brutes*, as to be but a lit-  
tle lower than the *Angels*, nay akin  
to *God himself, the Father of Spirits.*

My

Ser. VI. My *Musical Skill*, say others, the  
Glory of the Artist above the Un-skilful ; and that wherein *David*  
had the Glory of excelling, as *Jubal* had of the first Invention. My  
*Tongue*, say others ; this is also the  
Glory of a Man above dumb Creatures, and the Glory of a wise  
Man above a Fool. And as the  
Tongue is the Glory of a Man, so  
the Glory of the Tongue is to glo-  
rify God. Praise is the Glory of  
all other Uses to which the Tongue  
is employ'd. And the Tongue is  
in the Body that *Temple of the Holy*  
*Ghost*, what the silver Trumpet  
was in the *Temple of Solomon* ; to  
sound the high Praises of God,  
and express the rais'd Affections of  
our Souls.

§. 2. *Awake Psaltery and Harp.*

The one for a Psalm, the other  
for a spiritual Song or Hymn : q. d.  
All my musical Instruments and  
Skill I will employ in, and conse-  
crate to the Glory of him, who  
puts new Songs into my mouth.  
He first teaches my Fingers to  
sing, and then to play the *Epini-  
cion*, or Song of Triumph. Sound  
then,

then, my Psaltery and Harp, emu-  
lous of those that are about the  
Throne above: Your Melody can  
soften my Cares, lay my Fears,  
and turn my *Cave* into a *Quire*.

As to these Instruments in the  
Worship of God, they were  
doubtless allow'd to *David*, and to  
the Church in his time. They  
were agreeable to the State of  
that Church and People, who were  
led very much by their Senses;  
and whose infant and less discern-  
ing Condition made it needful for  
the Natural Man to have some-  
thing to fasten upon, and be en-  
tertain'd with in the Worship of  
God, and to sweeten and take off  
from the Labour and Burden of  
that Service. But as the Gospel-  
Worship and Appointments are a  
more spiritual, pleasant, and rea-  
sonable Service, and need them less,  
so in the Gospel-Institution we  
find no Footsteps of them; and we  
know who first brought them into  
the *Church*\*, as well as who first  
brought

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\* Pope Vitalianus, about the Year 666.  
At Vitalianus Cultui divino intentus, & Re-  
gulam

Ser. VI. brought them into the *World*. It  
 is not my busines here to dispute  
 this matter ; and he must at any  
 time do it but forrily, whose In-  
 clination is against him all the  
 while, and whose Genius tempts  
 him to wish himself solidly confu-  
 ted in all he can advance. But  
 since I find these *Instruments* in my  
 Text, and since the *Sound* of such  
 Texts as these is made use of to  
 turn the publick Worship so fre-  
 quently into Consorts of Musick ;  
 I shall leave 'em with this Re-  
 mark : That to let them alone, es-  
 pecially in publick Worship, tho'  
 one thought them tolerable, has  
 a much better Grace with it, than  
 to declare them *sorely displeasing to*  
*God, and that they filthily defile his*  
*holy House and Place of Prayer* †,  
 and

gulam Ecclesiasticam composit, & Cantum  
 ordinavit, adhibitis Consonantium (ut qui-  
 dam volunt) Organis. *Platina in Vit. Pont.*

† *Homily of the Time and Place of Prayer,*  
 2d Part. *The Homily relates that a Woman*  
*should say to her Neighbour, at the Time of*  
*the Reformation ; Alas, Gossip, what shall*  
*we do at Church, since all the Saints are*  
*taken*

and yet to bring them into his Ser. VI.  
holy House and Place of Prayer,  
for the use of all promiscuously,  
who will sing in the Assembly,  
whether they think 'em so much as  
tolerable or no.

§. 3. *I my self will awake early.*

And without this all the rest  
had been an empty Sound : There  
would have been no Melody to the  
Lord, whatsoever good Musick he  
might have made to himself. He  
would not put God off with a Sa-  
crifice of mere Air. He summons  
the Attendance of all his Powers.  
*Himself* is the Offering ; and his  
Musick plays to the Sacrifice, as  
it goes up in holy Affections and  
spiritual Joys : and unless these ac-

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taken away, since all the goodly Sights we  
were wont to have are gone, since we can-  
not hear the Piping, Singing, Chaunting, and  
Playing upon the Organs, that we could be-  
fore. But, Dearly Beloved, we ought greatly  
to rejoice, and give God thanks, that our  
Churches are deliver'd out of all those things,  
which displeas'd God so sore, and filthily  
defil'd his holy House, and his Place of  
Prayer ; for the which he hath justly destroy'd  
many Nations, &c.

Ser. VI. company the Song, the mere Breath of an Organ, or the Tremblings of the Strings of an Harp, is as good Devotion, and less offensive to God.

II. To press this Excitation, to which David in these Words awakens and stirs up himself. Consider,

§. I. By the precedent Discourses it's apparent God expects it from you, and insists upon it.

Where the Precepts are so positive, and the Directions so carefully laid down, it can never be thought he has left you at liberty. Supposing your Obligation clear to you, a wilful Neglect here is not reconcilable to that Sincerity that has respect to all God's Commands. Praise is the proper Tribute due to God, the Eternal King; and where it is not paid, we have Instances that God has constrain'd for it upon the best of Men, who indeed do always owe Chron. the most. All Hezekiah's Goodness in other respects could not

protect him under the Neglect of Ser. VI.  
rendring to God according to the Bene-  
fits he had receiv'd. And to say  
that this rendring to the Lord may  
be done other ways, besides singing  
his Praises, is true; but does no  
more satisfy the Authority which  
has appointed also *this way*, than  
the doing of some Dutys will  
atone for the Neglect of others:  
as if because a Man acknowledg'd  
God by Hearing, he need not do  
it by Prayer, &c.

§. 2. You cannot answer the Neg-  
lect to Gratitude, any more than to  
Obedience.

It's fit the Benefactor should  
chuse his own way of being ac-  
knowledg'd; and he has particu-  
larly told us, that *he that offereth  
Praise glorifies him*. The Motives  
to it are infinite, and the Ingrati-  
tude must be monstrous, where  
the Obligations are so many. Does  
he not daily load us with his Benefits,  
and crown the Year with his Loving-  
kindness? And his tender Mer-  
cys over us, do they not keep  
pace with, nay, out-number our  
Pulse and our Moments? Think-

Ser. VI. how glorious he is in himself, as  
well as how beneficent to us; and  
Exod. that he places so much of *his Glory*  
XXXIII. in his Goodness to us, and it must  
18, &c. awake *your Glory* in Praises to  
him.

For whom did he raise the noble Architecture of this World, where your Eyes cannot look off from a Miracle? The Earth so situated and furnish'd, as to be *full of the Goodness of God, so is also the great and wide Sea.* But God needed not the Cattel of the thousand Hills of the one, nor the Fish of the other. For whom did he so furnish the Heavens over our heads? He that inhabited Eternity, needed neither Times, nor Seasons: But he knew how much we needed the useful Variation of Summer and Winter, Light and Darkness.

Can we behold *the Sun, Moon, and Stars*, their artful Order, the exact Periods of their Motion, their Brightness and Influence, and not strike in with *David* upon a Ps. VIII. 2. like Survey, *How excellent is thy Name, O Lord?* 'Tis thy Glory has

has gilded their Beams ; thy Skill Set. VI.  
has fix'd their Orbs. Not to give         
God the Glory due unto this part  
of his Name, looks like a Combi-  
nation with the Enemy of his  
Honour to defeat the Design of  
the whole Creation, which is to  
*declare the Glory of God* ; but *that*  
it can do only objectively. *Man*  
is the Priest in this great Temple  
of the World, whose Tongue  
must articulate and express what  
they silently offer ; he must collect  
the Incense they all afford, and lay  
it upon the Altar. But further,

Need you be put in mind of  
that nursing *Providencœ*, Provision,  
and Preservation, that has follow'd  
you all your days, with as tender  
and watchful a Care, as if there  
had been but one Person in the  
World to look after ; and yet at  
the same time provides for the  
Millions and Millions that compose  
the large Family of Heaven and  
Earth ? Feeds *them above* with  
Light and Love, and fills our  
Hearts *below* with Food and Glad-  
ness. Not forgetting to spread a  
Table for the Fowls of the Air,

Ser. VI. who light on the ground to gather the providential Meat, then rise and sing among the Branches, *Psal. CIV. 12.* tho it be but for a Dinner upon half a Worm, a Sip of Water, and a poor Lodging in a Bush, are thankful in their way; as the Poet renders that Verse:

Tate. *Where shady Trees, from scorching Beams,  
Yield shelter to the feather'd Throng:  
They drink, and to the bounteous Streams  
Return the Tribute of their Song.*

We need but mention the Grace of Redemption, to awaken every Christian's Glory to the Song of the Lamb. For has he snatched us from weeping and wailing, and shall we not sing? Shall we not break forth into Singing? When Angels lead the way, shall not we who are nearest concern'd repeat, the Glory to God in the highest for this Good-Will to Men? For his Mercy endureth for ever: Let the Redeem'd of the Lord say so.

Should

Should I go over the Means of Ser. VI.  
Grace, the Hopes of Glory; the  Blessings that spring out of the Earth, and those that come down from Heaven; the Comforts and Directions of his Word; the Refreshment of his Ordinances; the Kingdom a Man enjoys in Peace of Conscience; the Heaven upon Earth foretasted in the Joy of the Holy Ghost; the Triumphs of Soul in the Sense and Evidence of Pardon; the growing Image of God toward Perfection; the Comforts in Death, and Confidence in Judgment: Should I enlarge upon each of these, I should turn my Excitation into a Song; and following the Train of these Motives, should immediately lose my self in Heaven: whose high Hallelujahs must be answer'd from Earth with, *O give thanks unto the Lord!* for his Mercy endureth for ever: Let the Redeem'd on the Earth say so, and echo back to the Redeem'd in Heaven: as two Instruments, tho at a distance, if tun'd alike, will answer each other.

Ser. VI. §. 3. Consider the Nature and  
Excellence of the Duty, as it has  
Ser.I.&III been laid before you.

Singing Psalms is a Compound of several other Dutys ; it contains Prayer to a very great advantage : The Stretch of the Voice does humour and lead on the earnest reaching of the Mind after the desir'd Blessing. 'Tis the very Element and Breath of Praise ; and the *Apostle* tells us, that *Teaching* and *Admonishing* one another is perform'd in singing *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*. For when we sing of *Judgment*, 'tis awakening to Sinners ; and when we sing of *Mercy*, it is comforting to all. Meditation can't have a better Help. The solemn Movement of the Time gives room for the Mind to compafs the full Sense of the matter, and to impress it deep ; and while the Tongue is making the *Pause*, the Heart may make the *Elevation*. In short, it gives an Accent to all Duty ; 'tis the Musick of all other Ordinances ; 'tis adapted and futed to all Circumstances ; as appears from these Psalms

Psalms compos'd upon all Occa-<sup>Ser. VI.</sup>sions and Subjects; Doctrinal, Prophetical, Hortatory, and Historical: of Praise and Prayer; of Grief and Joy, in the Penitential and Complaining, in the Triumphal and Rejoicing: as if singing of Psalms could stand for every thing, and like the *Manna* in the *Wilderness*, have a Tast of all the other Food we enjoy in the House of God.

So that tis a Duty that seems design'd to reach many Ends at once; and fitted to move and raise the Mind, to stir and exercise the Graces, to excite our Joy, and to vent our Grief. It is not only calculated for a time of Joy, tho' that's the Climate under which it mostly thrives. There is many a weeping Song indited for a time of Trouble, and some have found this Musick *sweetest* upon the *Waters*: They have never sung with more Melody in the Heart, than when 'twas with Tears in the Eyes.

It has been already remark'd, that *Luther* and his Company us'd

Ser. VI. to sing away their *Fears*, and sing  
up their *Confidence* in God in the  
worst of Times; when the pros-  
pect of Affairs was threatening and  
melancholy, and the Company a-  
bout him dejected by Apprehe-  
nsions from the Enemys of the Re-  
formation.

Allowance must indeed be made  
for the Constitutions of some, and  
the first Shocks of Grief in others,  
and the different degrees of Grace,  
and of Strength of Nature: yet  
it must be acknowledg'd that this  
Duty has remov'd Grief from  
some, or in others turn'd it into  
a better channel; i.e. from a worldly  
*Sorrow that worketh Death*, into  
*a godly Sorrow that worketh Repentance*  
~~unto Life~~. Has taken off the cor-  
rosive Fret of worldly Crosses and  
Disappointments, and turn'd it  
into a more genuine and healing  
Grief: which has enabled Chris-  
tians to drop those Tears in Joy,  
that were rais'd by Sorrow; and  
to vent that agreeable Confusion  
of Passions, which the Chequer-  
work of Providence does some-  
times throw them into. As when

Sorrow

Sorrow had fill'd the Hearts of the Ser. VI.  
*Disciples* at the parting with their   
*Master*, and yet *Peace* and *Good Cheer* was the Legacy he left them, this was the Ordinance they chose to close all with. So *Christ*, to fute this Frame, went out singing towards the *Cross*, as some of our *Martyrs* have done towards a *Stake*: So futed is this Duty to all the various Sallys of an holy Soul; it refines and purifies the Passions and Affections it draws forth; that while the Joys of the Wicked are but Sparks of their own kindling, or an expiring Blaze, this Joy, like the Fire from Heaven of old, does both kindle the Sacrifice, and carry it up along with it.

This Duty and this Frame must needs shorten our way to Heaven, and take off the Wearisomness of our Journey: 'tis going to Heaven, as one says, per *Compendium Iineris*, by the shortest Cut. Indeed it's better to go to Heaven any how than not at all; but we may thank our selves for a heavy mournful Passage, when the Righteous

Ser. VI. teous are describ'd as going thither singing; *They shall sing in the way of the Lord, for great is the Glory of our God.* Not that these Persons escape their particular Crosses; but by the help of this Practice and Frame they do not sourly and morosely drag their Cross along, as if vex'd that there is any such thing as a Cross in Christ's Religion: but they seem cheerfully to run away with it toward Heaven upon this Consideration, because *great is the Glory of God*; because of the far more exceeding and eternal Weight of *Glory.*

§. 4. I shall press the Exhortation, from the Honour that God has put upon this Ordinance of singing the Divine Praises.

The Judgment of God is according to Truth; and 'tis at your peril, that you slight, or neglect, or think meanly of a Duty that God has put such an Honour upon: Honours that seem'd design'd to show, among other ends, how much he is concern'd for it, we in it, and what we may expect from it.

He

He has honour'd it with most Ser. VI.  
signal Appearances of himself; he ~~is~~ himself descended, and fill'd the Temple with a bright Cloud, as the Singers were praising the Lord, saying, *Praise the Lord, for he is* 2 Chron. good, for his Mercy endureth for e-<sup>V.</sup> 13. ver; and then the House was fill'd with a Cloud, so that the Priests could not stand to minister by reason of the Cloud, for the Glory of the Lord fill'd the House of God.

God has crown'd it with eminent Successes and Blessings: Jehosaphat's Singers went before the Army, praising the Beauty of Holiness, and 2 Chron. their Enemys slew one another; XX. 21. and he ascrib'd his Victory more to the Divine Song, than to the Military Sword.

God has set the Broad Seal of Heaven to it by *Miracle and Conversion* at once, confirming thereby its Divine Original, its Efficacy and Power upon the Heart: Paul and Silas sung Praise at Mid-night, the Foundations shook, the Prison-Doors were open'd, every man's Bands were loos'd, and the Sailor converted. First Nature trembled, and

Act. XVI.

26.

An EXHORTATION to  
Ser. VI. and then the Jailor's Heart ; which  
shows this way of praising God  
to be a means of Grace. Here  
were Songs in the Night without a  
Figure, and Musick that moves the  
Stones themselves without a Fiction.

§. 5. It's an Ordinance against  
which Satan and his Agents have ex-  
press'd a great deal of Rage ; and for  
which, on the other hand, good Peo-  
ple have always had an high Value  
and Esteem.

It has been very much the Ob-  
ject of Satan's Spite and Persecu-  
tion ; and therefore our Neglect  
would fall in with the Design of  
the Enemy of God's Glory, and  
our Salvation. I may venture to  
say, that this Ordinance has had  
its Martyrs and Confessors too, as  
well as the other Parts of our no-  
ble Religion. The following In-  
stances will at least show a mighty  
Value for this Ordinance.

In the Reign of Julian the Apo-  
state, when the Oracle of Daphne  
(or they that manag'd it) was dis-  
**Dr. Cave's** turb'd that the Bones of **Babylas**  
**Life of Ba-** the Martyr lay so near it ; the  
**bylas.** Christians were order'd to remove  
them,

them; and *Theodorus*, a godly Ser. VI. young Man, at the Head of the ~~the~~ Company, brought away his *Coffin*, singing as they went that part of Psalm XCVII. where 'tis said, *Confounded be all they that worship graven Images.* Julian inrag'd, commanded the Ringleader to be apprehended; 'twas done: *Theodorus* is seiz'd, and tortur'd from Morning to Night with variety of unparallel'd Crueltys, and a Succession of fresh Tormentors; and tho he was taken up for singing a Psalm in contempt of the Emperor's Religion, yet while he was upon the *Rack*, and the Tormentors plying him on every side, he continu'd with a chearful Countenance to sing the same over again, *Confounded be all they that worship graven Images.* The other is that of *Publia*, who, as Julian pass'd by, would sing *Psal. CXV. 4.* Their *Idols are Silver and Gold, the Works of Mens Hands;* they that make them are like unto them: and when commanded to be silent, especially when the Emperor pass'd by, she sung on *Psal. LXVIII. 4. Let God arise,*

Ser. VI. arise, and let his Enemys be scatter'd. Enrag'd at this, the Apostle commanded her to be brought before him, and beaten till she was all bloody : all which she took as the highest Honour, went back to her House, and continu'd to sing with those about her. Her Behaviour in this I am not here to dispute, I mention it only as an Instance of a zealous Adherence to this part of her Religion, singing of Psalms.

The Value of the Primitive Christians for this Duty was so great, that when they met in the greatest Dangers, and in the Night, this nevertheless made a part of their Worship : And by one that liv'd near the second Century, we are told, that 'twas then among the Marks of a Christian, that he was one that prais'd God with Thanksgiving and singing of Psalms ; and Alex. that the holy Souls of that time were continually blessing, and praising, presenting Hymns to God, and singing Psalms. Praise is the very Breath of the new Creature, and can it ever be wholly stopt in a living

Plin. Ep. ad Traj. lib. 6.

*Δι ευχα-*  
*ρισιας καὶ*  
*ταλπω-*  
*διας. Clem.* giving and singing of Psalms ; and  
*Alex.* that the holy Souls of that time were  
*Ἄει εἰρῆ-* continually blessing, and praising,  
*στα, υμνεῖ-* presenting Hymns to God, and sing-  
*στα, ἐυλο-* ing Psalms. Praise is the very  
*γέστα,* Breath of the new Creature, and  
*ψάλλεσθαι.* can it ever be wholly stopt in a  
*Id. Strom.*

living Soul? Surely the Righteous Ser. VI.  
shall give Thanks unto thy Name. *Pr. CXL.*  
When all the World is call'd upon  
to do so, 'twou'd be strange for  
them to be silent.

*Awake my Glory;* q. d. it's the  
Glory of a good Man, that when  
his Mind is tun'd, his Soul can go  
up with his Song, and is able to  
mount above the Attraction of  
worldly Pleasures, and the Impres-  
sion of worldly Occurrences, glo-  
rying in the Lord: *My Glory* I do  
not place in my Nomination to  
the Kingdom, nor in my military  
Skill, nor in my Relation to King  
*Saul*; but that I have a *fix'd Heart*  
and a *ready Tongue* to sing and give  
Praise.

Other Christians have chosen  
rather to endure all Torments  
than quit the Practice, and give up  
the Ordinance.

And at the time of the *Reformation* you might, both in *England* <sup>Reform.</sup> and *France*, distinguish *Papists* and <sup>vol. 2. p.</sup> *Protestants* by their enmity against <sup>94.</sup> this Duty, or Value for it. When *England* began to shake off *Rome*, we are told, by a learned Writer,  
“ That

Ser. VI. " That Mens Affections to the  
~~~~~ " Work of Reformation were  
" every where measur'd by their  
" singing or not singing of the  
" translated Psalms. And as to  
France, when *Clement Marot*, a  
*Courtier* and a *Poet*, had consecra-  
ted his *Muse* to God, and tran-  
slated about fifty of *David's*  
Psalms into French Metre; *Beza*  
did an hundred more, and all the  
Scripture-Songs: *Lewis Guadimet*,  
the *Asaph* or *Jeduthun* of that Age,  
skilfully set them to those melo-  
dious Tunes that are sung to this

Synod. in day. This holy Ordinance so  
Gallia. Re. charm'd the Ears and Affections of  
form. vol. all, that it gave a mighty Spread  
I. p. 5. to the Reformation, and contrib-  
uted greatly to the Propagation  
of the Gospel. Persons of all  
Ranks sung Psalms, not only in  
the Temples, but in their Familys;  
and no Gentleman of the Re-  
form'd Religion would sit down  
at his Table without praising God,  
by singing a Psalm: and they  
made it a special Part of their  
Morning and Evening-Worship.  
The Rage of the Popish Clergy a-  
gainst

gainst this was no wonder, but Ser. VI.  
the manner of managing their ~~Opposition~~  
Opposition was remarkable, and  
the Alarm that it gave them.

'Twas represented to the King, Beze Hist.  
that the *Church was falling*, and Eccl. de  
that the *Magistrate* was going to France,  
be depos'd, and that the *Lutherans* Part I. p.  
were raising Sedition, because 141, 142.  
they sung Psalms ; tho the Psalms  
for the *King's Majesty*, and the  
Prosperity of the Kingdom were  
always sung first : Whereupon the  
singing of Psalms was prohibited  
all the Kingdom over.

But their usual Methods of Force  
and Violence were not the only  
Opposition they made to this Or-  
dinance : Profane Songs were in-  
courag'd, *Catullus* and *Tibullus* were  
brought into the Field against *Da-  
vid* and *Asaph* ; and the Ribaldry  
of those obscene Poets, whom the  
Cardinal of *Lorain* had procur'd Synodicon  
to be translated, and sung in the <sup>at sup\*</sup> Court,  
was oppos'd to the teach-  
ing and admonishing one another in  
*Psalms*, *Hymns*, and *spiritual Songs* :  
as if they were conscious who  
were the best Allys to their Cause,  
those

Ser. VI. those inspir'd from Heaven, or  
 those from Hell; and that the *Romish Church* had less to fear from the Profaneness of those *wanton Poets*, than from the singing *David's Psalms with Grace in the Heart.*

It's certain, that if this Ordinance had had fair play, *Popery* would have been driven out by it, as surely as the *evil Spirit* in *Saul* fled before *David's Harp*, or the *Ammonites* before *Jehosaphat's Singers*. No wonder then 'twas one of the first things struck at, both when the *Reformation* was first begun, and the Extirpation of our Religion more lately design'd, and carry'd on in *France* by the *Great Persecutor* of this Day, in comparison of whom the *Nero's* and *Dio-clesian's* of old were harmless and modest Names.

*Les Plain-  
tes des  
Protest.  
cruellem.  
opprimes  
en Franc.  
M. Claud.*

Singing *Psalms* was always an insupportable Part of our Worship to the *Popish Clergy*: They omitted no Endeavours to deprive the *Protestants* of this Consolation by several *Edicts*. Some forbidding Singing in private *Houses*; some commanding them to cease Singing,

ing, even in their *Churches*, when Ser. VI.  
the Sacrament past by, or at the ~~time~~<sup>Hist. Apol.</sup>  
time of any Procession. But at ~~length~~<sup>des Eglises</sup>  
length, when the Project of de-<sup>Ref.</sup> Ref. de  
stroying the Reform'd was ripe <sup>Franc. cap.</sup>  
for execution, they got it univer-<sup>18.</sup>  
sally prohibited by an *Arrest* of  
*Council* in the year 1661. Then it <sup>Histoire</sup>  
was criminal to sing Psalms either <sup>de l'Edict</sup>  
in publick or private, upon penal-<sup>de Nants.</sup>  
ty of 500 *Livres*; their Psalm-  
Books were burnt publickly by  
the common Hangman, and se-  
veral were beaten and sent to Pri-  
son for praising God that way:  
as if *David's Psalms* were a very  
naughty Book, and not so fit to  
be trusted with the common Peo-  
ple as *Catullus* and *Tibullus*.

Hereupon criminal Processes  
were form'd against several, who  
made no more difficulty of viola-  
ting this Order, than *Daniel* did  
with respect to that Decree which  
forbad him to pray to his God.

A *Protestant Minister* publish'd a M. Brou-  
little Book in the Defence of sing-<sup>guier</sup> Mi-  
ning Psalms, and to show the In-<sup>nistre de</sup>  
justice and Impiety of these Prohi-<sup>Nismes.</sup>  
bitions, and the Obligations that  
all

Ser. VI. all Christians are under to sing  
the Praises of God: 'Twas order'd, by another *Arrest of Coun-*  
*cil, Ann. 1663.* that his *Book* should  
be *burnt*, the Author *banish't* for  
a Year, and render'd incapable of  
exercising his Ministry during that  
time; and that the *Bookseller*, who  
printed it, should not only be *ba-*  
*nish'd* for two Years, but should  
pay 300 *Livres*; and neither he,  
nor any of his *Family*, should ever  
keep *Shop* any more: which was  
executed accordingly. But notwithstanding these Declarations,  
and the Severity with which they  
were executed, so vast a number  
continu'd to sing Psalms both in  
their Houses and elsewhere, that  
those *Judges* who had any Remains  
of Honour or Conscience, were  
asham'd to execute always the  
Severity of these *Edicts*: Yet they  
continu'd in full force, and as the  
*Persecution* encreas'd, they redou-  
bled the rigorous Execution of  
these Prohibitions against singing  
of Psalms.

Among others, 'twas a noble  
Testimony born to this Ordinance  
by

by an *Artisan*, of the Town of Ser. VI.  
*Castres* in the Upper *Languedoc*:   
When an *Officer* shew'd him the  
Declaration against singing Psalms,  
he confounded the Adversary, by  
subscribing at the bottom no other  
Answer than this, with his own  
Hand: Psal. XXXIV. 1. *I will bless  
the Lord at all times, his Praise  
shall be continually in my Mouth.*

*In their Version:*

Jamais ne Cesserai,  
De Magnifier, le Seigneur,  
En ma Bouche aurai son Honneur  
Tant que vivant serai.

*Tate and Brady:*

Thro' all the changing Scenes of  
Life,  
In Trouble, or in Joy,  
The Praises of my God, shall still  
My Heart and Tongue employ:

This was indeed with David to say, *While I live I will praise the Lord; I will sing Praises to my God while I have my Being.* As if David liv'd by the Breath of Praise, and desir'd to live no longer than he could do so. I

Ser. VI. I may be allow'd to mention, as  
*Short Hist.* a further Instance of a mighty  
of Revolut. value for this Ordinance, the Peo-  
of Orange. *ple of Orange*; who when the me-  
lancholy News was brought them  
that they were abandon'd to the  
*French Cruelty* without Relief, and  
that they must leave their Habi-  
tations and Country, they were  
resolv'd to *part with a Psalm*:  
and judging it to be the last Li-  
berty they should have of assem-  
bling in the *Church*, thither they  
all repair in Crowds, and melting  
into Tears: The *Minister*, who  
preach'd that day, caus'd the  
L<sup>I</sup>st Psalm to be sung kneeling;  
Sing they would, tho' they were  
interrupted with a great many  
Sighs, and Sobs and Tears.

Shall they sing thus in the Fur-  
nace of Affliction, and glorify  
God in the midst of the Fires?  
Shall they not only offer the Sacri-  
fice of Praise, but make themselves  
a Sacrifice rather than omit it?  
And will not their Singing up-  
braid our Silence and Neglect?  
Blessed be God we are not call'd  
to be *Martyrs* for the *Ordinance*,  
nor

nor to sing the Songs of the Lord in Ser. VI.  
*a strange Land,* and in the want *of*  
of all things : Nay in the want of  
all things (says a great Soul)  
should we praise the Lord ; tho'  
he has taken away every thing  
else, if he hath not taken away  
Himself, who is greater and better  
than All. But where God has  
given all things pertaining to Life  
and Godliness, and fill'd the  
Mouth with good things, 'tis that  
the Lips should show forth his  
Praise, for our Personal, Family  
and Publick Mercys, in secret, in  
private, and in publick.

(1.) *Sometimes secretly, and alone by our selves.* David had his  
Songs in the Night, when alone ;  
and several of his Psalms seem  
compos'd for his own private Use :  
And the Apostle says, *If any Man,*  
any particular Man by himself, be  
merry, let him sing Psalms. The  
Voice of Praise will sweeten Re-  
tirement, perfume the Closet, and  
bring down the best of Company  
to us, or carry up our Souls to  
that which is so : This has been  
found, by many a poor Sufferer,

(2.) *In your Familys, supposing a competent Number, and capable Voices.* This moreover supposes Family-Worship (*i. e.*) that you are Christians, according to the Judgment of a great Person, whose words are these: “Constant Family-Worship is so necessary to keep alive a sense of God and Religion in the Minds of Men, that I see not how any Family, that neglects it, can in reason be esteem’d a Family of Christians, or indeed to have any Religion at all. And singing Psalms makes a refreshing enlivening part of that Worship, where it can be decently perform’d. That this was the Practice of the Primitive Christians, appears from several Testimonys produc’d by the learned Author of the *Enquiry into the Constitution and Discipline of the Primitive Church*: They sung Psalms at their Meals, and at their Festivals. Tertullian inveighing against Marriage

Part II.  
c. i.  
Clem.  
Alex.

\*

with

with Unbelievers, from the pre-Ser. VI. judice such an unequal Yoke would be to Family-Religion, takes particular notice of this Branch of it, of singing \* Psalms: *What Jar and Discord must Vanity and Profaneness be to this heavenly Musick of a Soul divinely tun'd?* And afterwards describing the Happy † Pair whom Love and Religion have united, he mentions this Part among the other Harmonys of such a Condition, *That they sing together* (sup-<sup>i</sup> Pct. III. posing Ability) as *Heirs of the 7. Grace of Life; neither their Prayers, nor their Psalms were hinder'd.* This was formerly more the Practice of good People, than 'tis now; and in later times, when Family-Religion was not so unfashionable a thing.

One of the Ministers, in a Farewel-Sermon, tells his Hearers, “ That he cou'd remember the “ time when a Person, on a Lord's “ Day, might hear a continu'd

\* Quid Maritus suus illi, vel marito quid illa cantabit? † Sonant inter duos Psalmi & Hymni, &c.

Ser. VI. " Melody of Psalms, in walking  
 ~~~~~ " from one end of this City to  
 " the other. It's certain there  
 are Family-Mercys and Blessings  
 that call for Family-Praises, as  
 well as publick and personal. *Da-*  
*vid* seems to mark the good Man's

Psalm  
 CXVIII. Door with this Inscription, *The*  
 15. *Voice of Rejoycing and of Salvation*  
*is in the Tabernacles of the Righteous*;

Ps. XXX. and he compos'd a *Psalm* on pur-  
 pose for the *dedicating* of his  
 Deut. XX. own *House*. Under the Law eve-  
 5. ry *House* was dedicated : Dedica-  
 tion and Worship make a Church,  
 and by this 'twill be known that  
 there is a Church in thy *House*.

Mr. Philip And as a *Man of God* us'd to say,  
 Henry's Life. " This is the way to hold forth

" Godliness, like *Rahab's* scarlet  
 " Thread, to such as pass by our  
 " Windows. And as the same  
 excellent Man us'd to say, " They  
 " do well who pray Morning and  
 " Evening in their *Familys*, but  
 " they do better who pray and  
 " read the *Scriptures*; but they  
 " do best of all, who pray, and  
 " read, and sing *Psalms*: and  
 " Christians should covet earnest-  
 " ly

" ly the best Gifts. This was his Ser. VI.  
own daily Practice, which he ma- ~~~  
nag'd so as to make it a Pleasure,  
and not a Task to Children and  
Servants ; seldom long, never te-  
dious : for he had an excellent Fa-  
culty of rendring Religion the  
most sweet and amiable Employ-  
ment in the World.

It's a Trifle to object we are  
afraid of being overheard, and  
that we shall only entertain the  
Banter of a scoffing World. In-  
deed a prudent Man will order his  
Affairs with Discretion, and Wis-  
dom is profitable to direct ; but  
examine, whether this is not be-  
ing ashamed of God and his Way.  
May not your Example and Prac-  
tice do good to others ? Has not  
your own Heart been warm'd  
and affected when you have gone  
by and heard a Family so im-  
ploy'd ? I shall only add, That if  
*Paul* and *Silas* had been afraid of  
being overheard, the Jailor might  
never have been converted.

(3.) *Awake your Glory, and sing  
to God in Publick, with the united  
Voices of the Congregation. Let us*

Ser. VI. come before his Presence with Thanks-  
giving, and make a joyful Noise  
Ps. XCV. 2. unto him with Psalms; and praise him  
in the midst of the great Congrega-  
tion.

*Be this the Burden of your Song,  
In full Assemblys bless the Lord;  
All who to Israel's Tribe belong,  
The God of Israel's Praise record.*

Psal. Tate.

I close all with an Address to  
two sorts of Persons.

*First,* You that are yet unsatisfy'd and unconvinc'd, have a care  
of a censorious judging Spirit, or  
reproachful Language: don't give  
way to any Estrangedness from  
your Brethren upon this account.  
Your differing Opinion in this  
Matter ought not to drive you  
from the Communion of those that  
practise Singing; because you are  
not forc'd to sing with them, but  
may be meditating all the while;  
and because of the indispensable  
Duty all Christians are under to  
allow each other the Liberty of  
Conscience. If a Congregation  
should

should be equally divided for, and Ser. VI. against this ; I can see no Reason why the one should say to the others, you shall not sing, while the Singers do not force it upon the Refusers ; but according to Rule, *Leave them that are otherwise minded, till God shall reveal it ; and yet whereto we have attain'd walking together.* I am not utterly a Stranger to the Twistings and Turnings us'd to evade this ; but be open to Conviction : Strain not for Difficultys : Do not make an hard shift to remain unsatisfy'd, while some may without Censure be suppos'd to practise many things in Religion upon less Evidence and weaker Proof. Omit not the Methods of Information, Reading, Prayer and Converse ; and when your Objections are fairly answer'd, let not Prejudice or Custom step up to the Breach, and maintain the Ground against a friendly Attack ; in yielding to which you'l afterwards see Reason to sing a Triumph over your own Defeat.

You !

Ser. VI. You that are *satisfy'd*, let not  
your Souls be *untun'd* by any  
slights that may be put upon it by  
the Profane on the one hand, or  
the Mistaken on the other. It  
sounds odd to you, the making it  
a Question, whether we should  
sing God's Praises or no? but let  
it not surprize you that this Or-  
dinance has its Enemys. Exercise  
a Candour and Love towards those  
you count mistaken; and tho you  
cannot, must not carry it so far  
as to sacrifice a plain Duty to their  
Prejudice, neither let your Zeal  
for one Duty eat up the other of  
Charity and Forbearance. Be true  
to your own Principles, and allow  
a Latitude to others.

Let your gracious Frame, and  
serious manner of performing it,  
and your spiritual Improvement  
by it, do an Honour to the Ordi-  
nance, and recommend it to o-  
thers.

Always admire the Grace and  
Goodnes of God in a Mediator,  
that does not disdain to accept of  
such Praises as ours. Admire that  
any

any thing we can do should be Ser. VI.  
call'd *Service*, and that any thing  
we can say should be call'd *Praise*.  
When the *Sons of the Morning* still  
*sing together*, and continually fur-  
round his Throne with unspotted  
Hallelujahs ; yet he says to a  
Worm, *Let me hear thy Voice*, for Cant. II.  
'tis pleasant. Certainly this is to 14.  
the end that my *Glory* should not  
be silent, but should sing and give  
*Praise*. With David's Resolve ;

**P S A L M.**

**I**N praising God, while he pro-  
longs  
*My Breath*, I will that Breath  
imploy :  
And join Devotion to my Songs,  
Sincere as is in him my Joy.

*While*

226 *An EXHORTATION, &c.*

Ser. VI.

~~~ While Sinners from Earth's Face  
are hurl'd,  
My Soul, praise thou his Holy  
Name:  
Till, with my Song, the listning  
World  
Join Consort, and his Praise pro-  
claim.

Tate.

---

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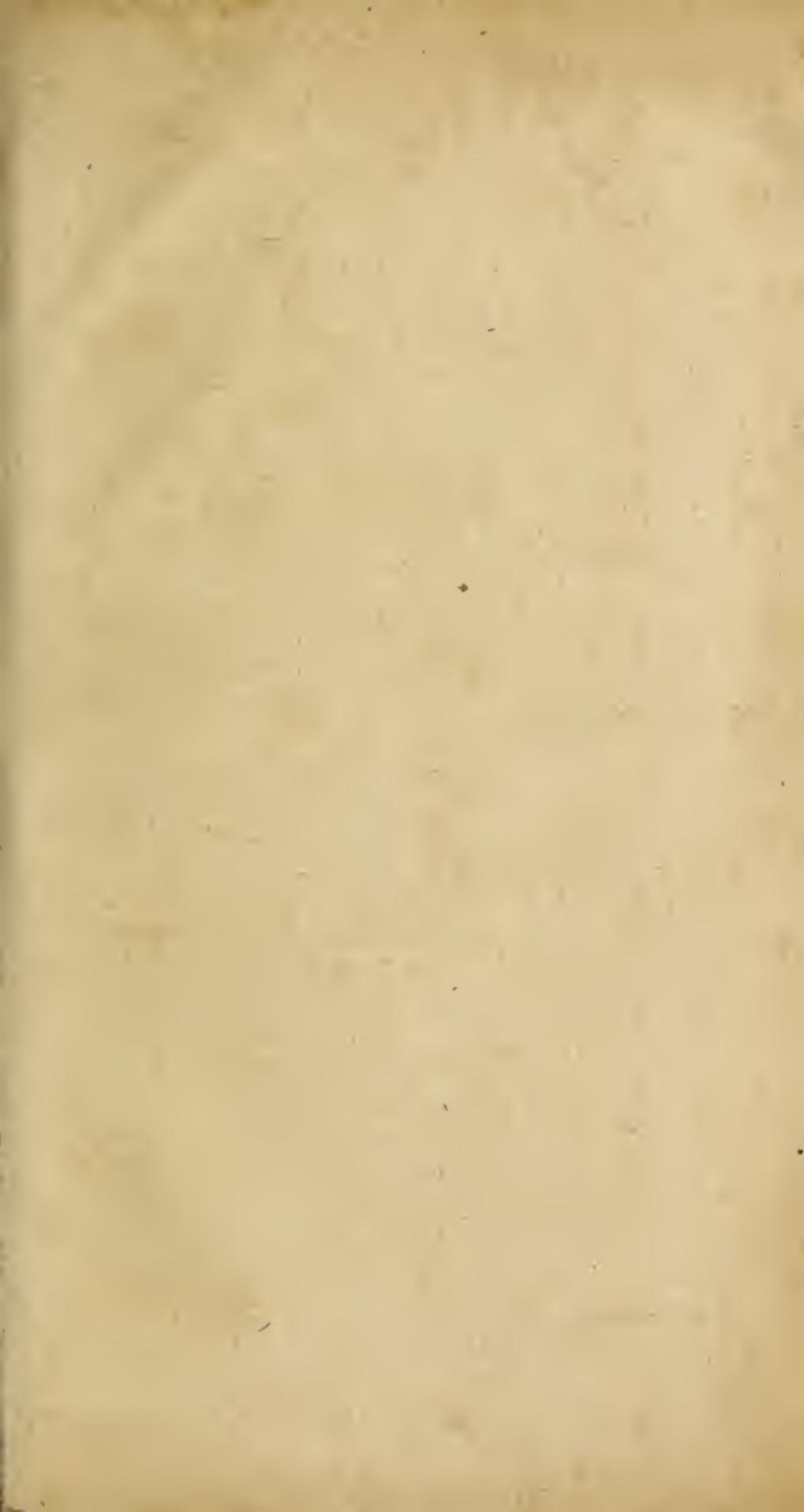
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